

# The Gramophone

Edited by **COMPTON MACKENZIE**

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ART SUPPLEMENT : Sir Landon Ronald.



# MINIATURE SCORES

*and their Relation to*

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The reading and following of a miniature score, particularly embracing Chamber Music, is by no means so difficult, and does not demand such technical knowledge as many people are wont to imagine, and once the experiment has been tried it is surprising how fascinating the study becomes—the composition at once has a new meaning and a bigger interest to the listener who is keen enough to try.

For example—let a string quartet record be played a little slower than indicated, and then follow in the score the instrument most easily detected—to the majority the Violoncello can be heard best by virtue of its tone, especially when played in the lower registers. At subsequent hearings the other instruments can be traced out clearly as the ear becomes more acquainted with the composition under review, until finally after some practice it will be found that a fair idea of any straightforward and diatonic work can be grasped by reading the score alone.

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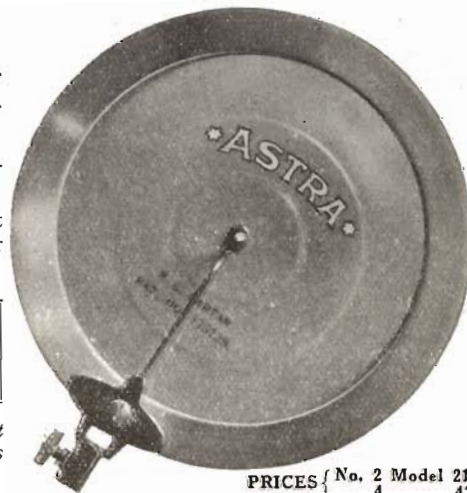
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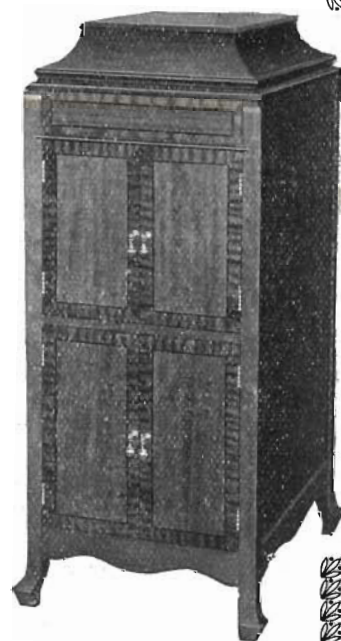
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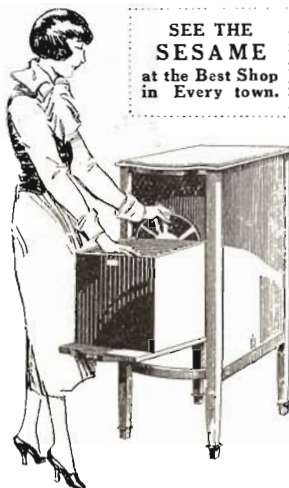
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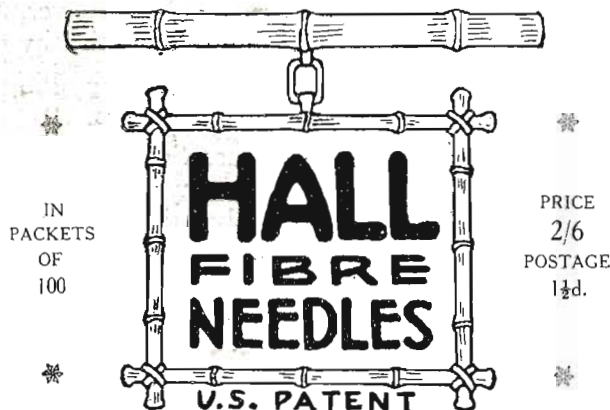
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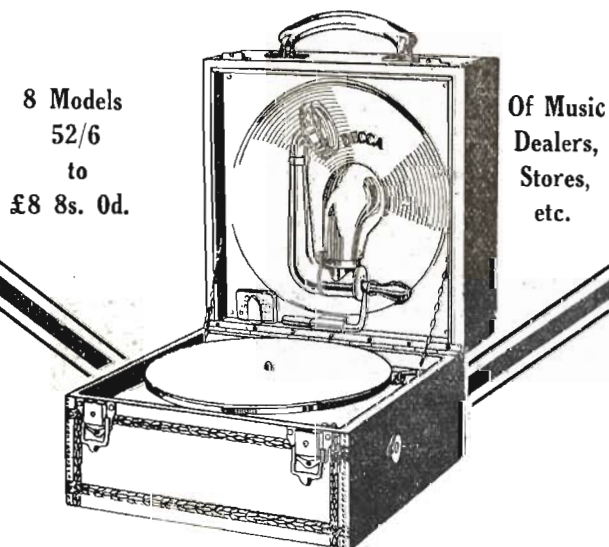
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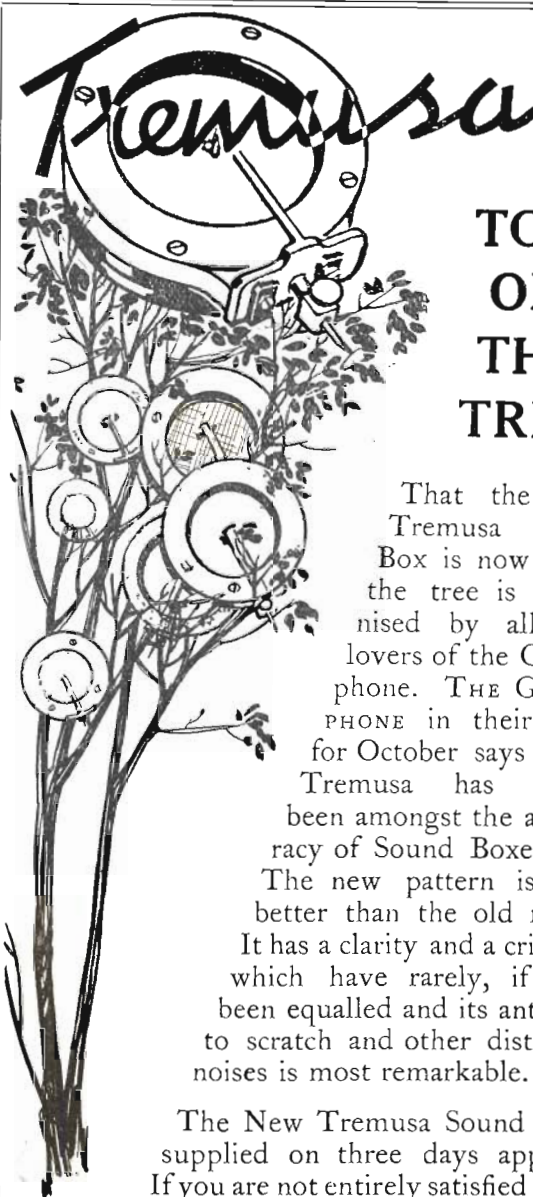
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 G 15634 { Still as the Night (*Carl Bohm*). Piano acc.  
 10" D/S 2/6 { An Autumn Love Song (*Wilfrid Sanderson*). Piano acc.  
 G 15635 { The English Rose (from "Merrie England") (*German*). Piano acc.  
 10" D/S 2/6 { Dolorosa (*Montague F. Phillips*). Piano acc.  
 G 15636 { The Red Star of the Romany (*Wilfrid Sanderson*). Piano acc.  
 10" D/S 2/6 { The Ducks and Jane and Me (*Hubert Brown*). Piano acc.  
 G 15637 { Country Folk (*May H. Brahe*). Piano acc.  
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 Leonard Gowings,  
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 Stephen Langley,  
 Baritone.  
 Lewis Endersby,  
 Bass.

**INSTRUMENTAL.**

- G 15638 { Golliwog's Cake Walk (from "The Children's Corner") (*Debussy*)  
 10" D/S 2/6 { Gavotte, No. 3—From "English Suite" (*Bach*)  
 G 15639 { Canzonetta (*d' Ambrosio*). Piano acc.  
 10" D/S 2/6 { Liebestrend (*Kreiser*). Piano acc.  
 G 15639 { Prière (*W. H. Squire*). Piano acc., Frank Reade  
 10" D/S 2/6 { Believe me if all those endearing young charms (*arr. Landon Ronald*). Piano  
 acc., Frank Reade  
 { Fantaisie Concertante (*Dermersseman*):—  
 Andante and Allegro.  
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 Piano accs. by Alice Mowae

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 Charles Jones, Flute,  
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 G 15642 { Fidgette (Intermezzo-Gavotte) (*Percy Fletcher*)  
 10" D/S 2/6 { No. 2—From "Three Light Pieces"

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**BAND.**

- G 15643 { The Water-Melon Fête (from "Americana Suite") (*Thurban*)  
 { The Tiger's Tail March (from "Americana Suite") (*Thurban*)  
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 { In a little Rendezvous (All alone with you) (*Ted Snyder*). Orch. acc.  
 G 15645 { A Sun-kist Cottage (In California) (*Gress-Olsen*). Acc. by Jeffries' Dance Quintet  
 { Lovers' Lane (*Hugo Frey*). Orch. Acc.  
 G 15646 { Shanghai (*H. Nicholls*). Acc. by Jeffries and his Rialto Orch.  
 { I loved—I lost (But what do I care) (*Mayerl-Paul*). Acc. by Jeffries' Dance  
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 { Follow the Swallow (*Henderson*). Fox-trot with Vocal Refrain  
 G 15649 { Doo Wacka Doo (*Gaskill-Donaldson*). Fox-trot  
 { Me and the Boy Friend (*Monaco*). Fox-trot  
 G 15650 { Shanghai (*H. Nicholls*). Fox-trot  
 { Savoy English Medley (*Debroy Somers*). One-step  
 G 15632 { I want to be happy (from "No, No, Nanette") (*Youmans*). Fox-trot.  
 { Until To-morrow (from "The Punch Bowl") (*Heghom-Van Alstyne*). Fox-trot  
 G 15651 { Honest and Truly (*Fred Rose*). Waltz  
 { A New kind of Man (With a new kind of love for me) (*Clare-Flatow*). Blues Fox-trot

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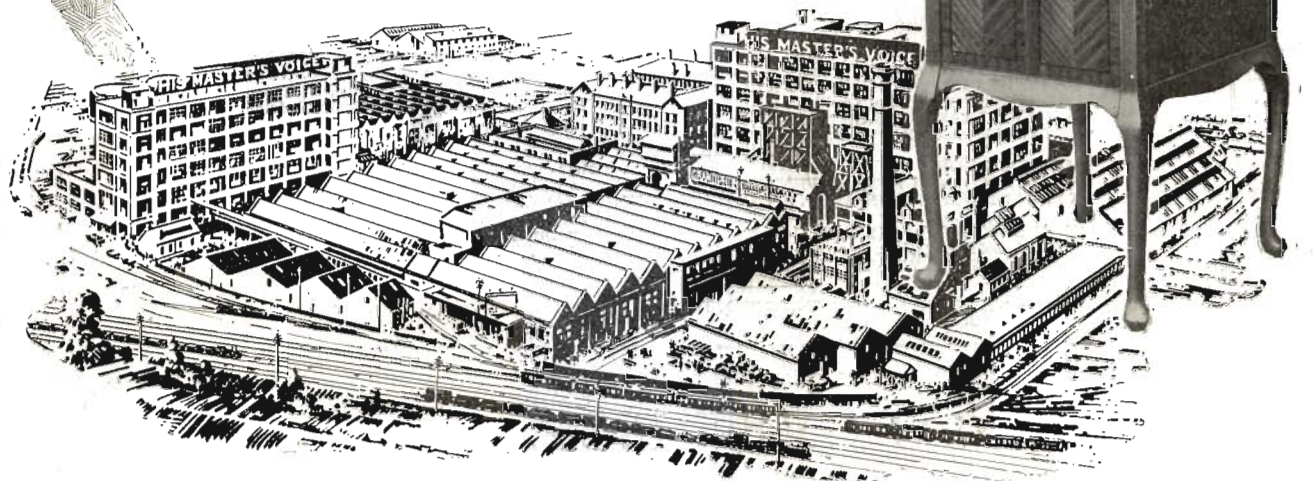
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## THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER

(Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

### The Jubilee of "Carmen"—II.

BIZET is not easy to sing. His music, like that of Mozart and Gounod, has certain qualities, certain peculiarities of idiom and style, that demand from the vocalist technical gifts, both natural and acquired, of a high order. In this way it is very deceptive music. At first hearing, or even at first glance, it seems to be so melodious, so straightforward and rhythmical in its vocal line, that one feels inclined to say "Oh, if you are anything of a singer you can surely manage this!" Yes, that is precisely the point; it can be "managed" well enough, but to be sung in the polished manner that the composer imagined when he wrote those catchy tunes requires something more. He demands the "art which conceals art," and that, as we know, is the most exacting art of all.

Into the exact reasons for this hidden difficulty which pervades every page of *Carmen*, it would occupy too much space to enter at length here and now. But my experience both as a teacher and a critic has made me only too familiar with them. Indeed, I will admit without hesitation that I have

heard even worse singing in *Carmen* than in *Faust*, which the humblest opera company will unhesitatingly attack, or *The Marriage of Figaro*, which the manager of any up-to-date troupe thinks fair game for his young people to exercise their talents upon. If the reader who judges by the contents of the gramophone catalogues cherishes any doubts upon this subject, let me point out, as a startling contrast, the disparity between the quantity of vocal selections from *Carmen* sung by the professional in the concert-room or the amateur in the drawing-room with the endless amount of Puccini that is purveyed in both by both. I am ready to wager that you will hear *Vissi d'Arte* or *Un bel dì* twenty times for one rendering of Micaela's song; not because they are more beautiful, for they distinctly are not, but simply because they are infinitely easier to sing, and can more readily be made effective by the soprano who is not an accomplished vocalist. Your daring baritone will always be able, I know, to make the *Toreador's Song* go down (with a decent accompanist to aid and abet him), and the tenor with the



necessary high notes will do as much, *perhaps*, with the *Flower Song*. After these things, however, what is there that you are likely to have offered you from *Carmen*?—positively nothing; unless it be in the form of a gramophone record.

Therefore, I say, let us realise from the outset that the *Carmen* music is not easy to sing, and that its value on the gramophone is not only enhanced by that fact, but to be counted proportionately to the credit of the artist who performs it. Bearing this in mind, both in retrospect and with regard to what is to come, let us now proceed with the consideration of our published records of the opera.

## ACT II.

It is in this act that we get the two most popular numbers for solo voice, viz., the *Toreador's Song* and the *Flower Song*; and, as a matter of course, both are very numerous recorded. Even with seven of the former and eleven of the latter I am by no means confident of having secured the whole of the available material, but—we have done our best. If there are others they are probably of "a certain age," and are now withdrawn from circulation—a contingency that collectors should always reckon with in these cases. And here I may mention that a set of three new Parlophone records which reached me too late last month comprise half a dozen instrumental selections that should be found very enjoyable. They are executed by the orchestra of the Berlin Opera House, under Dr. Weissmann, and have a sufficiency of full-bodied tone as well as rhythmical spirit and go, though the quality of the instruments is not quite up to ours. They consist (E.10245-6-7) of the following: *Introduction to Act I. and Chorus of Boys*; *Entr'acte, Act II.* and *Smugglers' Chorus, Act III*; *Intermezzo, Act III*; and *Ballet Music, Act IV*. On the other hand, not quite so recent are the solitary Columbia examples of the

### *Gipsy Dance,*

upon which the curtain rises in the scene at Lillas Pastia's, and of the subsequent

### *Smugglers' Quintet.*

Both, however, are deserving of praise for great liveliness and energy besides precision of ensemble. The dance is numbered (D.5585) and on one side only, while the quintet is in two parts (D.5587-8), a sensible arrangement with so long a piece. Fanny Aniuta takes part in all, and her clear, powerful tone rather throws into relief the thinner notes of two girls and, still more, the rough, raucous voices of the two men. Vocally, therefore, the balance is not satisfactory, though the general effect is inspiring. I have for convenience' sake taken these together, though in their actual order they are divided by the

### *Toreador's Song.*

This is the number which won the greatest popularity in Paris in course of the thirty-seven representations of *Carmen* given during the first year it was produced. It is not with the swinging march refrain, however, that the singer finds any difficulty, but rather the extended compass, the swift, sudden contrasts, the whirl and animation of the descriptive narrative depicting the bull-fight in song. The nature of the task is proved by the fact that although the crowd loves and applauds and encores it, the *Toreador's Song* very seldom creates the impression of being sung with ease and elegance by a true *espada*, a typical Spaniard, a man to whom the danger of a pretty face is far more serious than the rush of an Andalusian bull. That was how Del Puente and Lassalle and Plançon contrived to make you feel. But not very often, I am sorry to say, can you feel so nowadays, even amid the excitement of the theatre, much less the cooler atmosphere engendered by the sound of a gramophone. Never mind; here are some very good records, especially three by Italian baritones, who are on the whole the best Escamillos we have to-day. Mario Ancona (Pathé 5259) no longer sings on the stage, but he shares with Riccardo Stracciari (Col. 7355) and Cesare Formichi (Col. D.5586-7) the merit of putting a *legato* style and breadth of phrasing into this music, besides mere strepitous declamation. Stracciari's rendering is particularly telling, well sustained and powerful; and so, for that matter, is Formichi's, which covers both sides of the disc. Emilio di Gogorza (H.M.V. D.B.625) sings his in French with excellent voice and style, supported by a chorus, and I prefer it to that of Gaston Demarecy (Imperial 1334), of the Monte Carlo Opera, who is breathless and hurried and trembles a good deal. In this last a predominant fault is that the music is declaimed rather than sung, without any vocal charm whatever; and I make the same complaint concerning the English records of Norman Williams (V.F. 530) and George Baker (Voc. J.041200), both of which are extremely spasmodic in utterance. They try to be realistic and overdo it. An interesting link between the two big solos for the bull-fighter and the dragoon is the

### *Duet—Don José and Carmen,*

which, so far as I can perceive, is wholly neglected by English gramophone artists. Of the two that are available there is most dramatic colour in the one which begins with the *Halte-là* (H.M.V. D.K.108), by Geraldine Farrar and Giovanni Martinelli. The latter trolls forth his ditty *f* throughout with the opulent tone of which he possesses such an abundance. I think a gradual crescendo would have been better. The dance is sung by Miss Farrar with a rather excessive assumption of vulgarity, which she effects by a liberal mixture of open chest and



medium tone; while the castanets and the distant bugles sounding the retreat furnish the correct background. An Italian version by Fanny Aniuta and Luigi Bolis begins with José's entry (*Alfin sei giu*, Col. 5588) is less agitated, but on the whole not less effective. Both lead directly to the

### Flower Song.

Six of the eleven records are Italian, two French, and three English, and I will refer to them briefly in this order. Between the first-named there is really little to choose; they are typically Italian in the modern sense, as though cut out of rolls of the same quality and pattern, nearly identical in timbre, breathing, phrasing, and expression. Dino Borgioli (Col. D.1503) is more tasteful, but less robust and pure than Luigi Bolis (Col. 5589), who is very clear and telling. Manfredo Polverosi (Fonot. 69224) has a voice that wavers and becomes tremulous under pressure; his words are a "cross-word puzzle," his reading an irrelevant fragment, his B flat feeble. *Per contra*, Michele Fleta (H.M.V. D.B.524) is extremely slow and sentimental; he gives you the real "sob stuff," to which the listening Carmen must perforce succumb as soon as his mighty and prolonged B flat will permit him to add "io t'amo." Less lachrymose but more love-sick still, is the Don José of Armand Tokatyan (Voc. A.0224), who declares his feeling with much scooping and portamento, but as a matter of fact has a very agreeable voice. Best of all among the Italians is the Greek tenor, Ulysses Lappas (Col. D.1463), whose organ is not only of fine quality and power but artistically displayed, with a splendid high note at the end.

Of the two French records, I like that of Lucien Muratore (Pathé 5204) for charm of delivery and diction; that of Florencio Constantino (Col. A.692) for its purely vocal attractiveness, and old Italian suavity of tone-production. The English "varieties" are acceptable too in their way: Frank Mullings (Col. L.1443), manly and vigorous; Frank Titterton (Voc. D.02134), emphatic and in deadly earnest; and John Perry (V.F. 1024), clear, smooth distinct, and effortless.

For the remainder of the act we have to rely mainly on the series (Col. D.5590-1), sung in Italian by Fanny Aniuta and her colleagues, which may be described in simple language as "rough but honest." The only other number is *Là-bas dans la montagne*, a continuation of the duet already noticed (H.M.V. D.B.244), and sung in French by Geraldine Farrar. This, unlike the Italian, does not include the whole of the finale, with the other solo voices and chorus.

### ACT III.

Here, to my thinking, Bizet is at his finest, excelling in originality, romantic splendour, and dramatic characterisation either of the previous

acts. The ensembles are enriched with exquisite harmonic colouring and astonishing contrasts of rhythm; the climaxes grow with a delicacy of gradation and a sense of power that betray the master hand. Some day, perhaps, they will be reproduced for us on the gramophone with the perfect balance and beauty of tone that they deserve—the voices all equally good, the nuances of light and shade carefully studied, the handling of crescendos and diminuendos as skilful as it would be in a Mozart quartet or a Beethoven symphony. As it is, scarcely anything so far recorded rises to the level of the music. The ten-inch Columbias continue to fill in certain gaps, sometimes creditably, sometimes crudely, but always with Italian fluency and efficiency; as, for example, in the ensemble *Il nostro affar è il Doganier* (Col. D.5592), which follows directly after (Col. D.5591-2) a complete reproduction of the inspired episode known as the

### Card Trio.

In this scene, where Carmen's superstitious foreboding of death at the hands of her despised lover is first revealed, the cue arises from the merry duet of the gipsy-girls, Frasquita and Mercedès, whose piquant repartee, whilst they tell their fortune with the cards, is not a bit less important as a background than the tragic fatalism of Carmen which provides the main issue. The trouble is that in this record, even more than on the stage, the heroine takes the centre to a degree that relegates the other fair smugglers to absolute obscurity; while another actually obliterates them altogether. Nevertheless, Fanny Aniuta manages to be impressive with the aid of a large supply of chest tone; and so does another Milanese mezzo-soprano, A. Parsi-Pettinella (Fonot. 92037), though this lady over-accentuates her words at the expense of a resonant dramatic voice. The best individual rendering is that given in French by the talented Maria Gay (Col. A.5279), who cannot help being intensely dramatic and realistic or putting the true atmosphere into her Carmen, whether in the theatre or the recording-room. But it is realism without exaggeration, an effort not merely of voice and speech, but touched with the *afflatus* of born genius. What we have here may not be a veritable picture in sound of the *Card Trio*, but it is at least a graphic and moving delineation of Carmen's presentiment as she turns up the cards and reads "death" in her book of fate. For so much let us be thankful and pass on to

### Micaela's Air,

which I have in Italian, French, and English. The first (Col. D.5593) is beyond the capacity of Inez Ferraris, who may be good enough for Frasquita, but is quite unequal to this really difficult air, which so many sopranos believe easy—till they try it. The 'cello obbligato is missing, and replaced by



chords for the strings both here and in the excellent English record of Elsa Stralia (Col. 733), the tone whereof is clear and the text commendably distinct. For all-round merit, however, highest praise must be awarded to an original French version of Alma Gluck (H.M.V. D.B.279)—a delightful commingling of musical, expressive tone, clear diction, and artistic phrasing. The sole flaw in the whole thing is the superfluous "turn" and high B flat at the concluding bar.

In the succeeding

*Duet—Don José and Escamillo,*

the latter is represented (Col. D.5593-4) by Cesare Formichi, who henceforth holds his place in the Italian series to the end. He lends it both dramatic value and rich vocal colour, though it must be admitted that the tenor, Luigi Bolis, is quite his equal in the scene of the encounter, which begins at *No, non m'inganno*. In fact, I prefer this to the record (H.M.V. D.B.554) starting with *Ho nome Escamillo*, sung by Bernardo de Muro and Roberto Janni, which has a less spirited swing to it. The finale to the act follows, and is completed (Col. D.5594-5) on three sides of the two discs. There is no other rendering, but this is sufficiently adequate.

ACT IV.

With a reminder that the charming dance music of the last act (one number of which Bizet appropriated from his earlier opera, *La Jolie Fille de Perth*) occurs in the Parlophone group already noticed, there remains only to mention the two duets. The first of these is the

*Duet—Carmen and Escamillo,*

the tune of which many good judges consider the melodic gem of the opera; certainly it is one of those heavenly strains, "of purest ray serene," that one finds only in the pages of the great masters. The French version starts from the chorus acclaiming the entry of the Toreador and his radiant sweetheart, and the delicious *Si tu m'aimes* (H.M.V. D.K.107), admirably sung by Pasquale Amato and Geraldine Farrar, fills only the latter half of the record. On the other hand, Cesare Formichi and Fanny Aniuta (Col. D.5596) start at once with their duet (voices well balanced), and the rest comprises the captivating bit of musical dialogue wherein the two girls warn Carmen that Don José is lurking in the neighbourhood. The latter excerpt is the better of the two because it leads naturally into the

*Duet Finale—Carmen and José,*

which forms the climax of the drama. The Italian (Col. D.5596-7) cover three sides of two discs, sung by Fanny Aniuta and Luigi Bolis. The French are complete in two sides, namely, *C'est toi, c'est moi* and *Je t'aime encore*, sung respectively by Helen

Sadoven and Fernand Anseau (H.M.V. D.B.784) and by Giov. Martinelli and Geraldine Farrar (H.M.V. D.K.108). This last is not quite so satisfactory as the record of *Si tu m'aimes*; still the tone of both singers is very big and dramatic—Martinelli intensely pathetic in its despairing appeal, Farrar's fearless, defiant, contemptuous as ever. Helen Sadoven, another mezzo-soprano owning a lovely but tremulous voice, joins that excellent French tenor Anseau, with irresistible emotional force. And so two fine records bring out all that is vocally so touching, so impressively tragic, in the concluding scene of this wonderful opera.

If Bizet had not been one of the greatest lyric composers, he would have been one of the greatest pianists of his time. Liszt considered him as a boy one of the most amazing prodigies he had ever come across. But he was too full of music of his own, and its well-springs had perforce to overflow through broader, nobler channels than fingers and a keyboard could provide.

HERMAN KLEIN.



"Do you know this shop?"

Under this heading an account from an outside source was given last month (p. 393) of a certain "famous music house," and our readers were invited to recognise it. A small present of half a dozen records was offered to the first who sent us the correct answer. Up to the date of going to press we have received a large bundle of answers—but not a single correct one—not one which is even "warm." This is sufficiently astonishing when one considers all the clues which were given; and to be frank we fully expected a dozen correct answers by the first possible post. But what is much more astonishing is that 90 per cent. of the answers received named Messrs. Alfred Imhof, of 110, New Oxford Street. Seeing that Messrs. Imhof have no player-piano department at all and certainly do not stock "every record from the catalogues of at least a dozen companies," this was a wretched guess, and had it not been for an explicit assurance to the contrary from the House of Imhof, we should have suspected collusion! All we can do is to offer Messrs. Imhof our congratulations on having so large and blindly loyal a clientele. It is a notable tribute to them. Other firms suggested by readers were the Gramophone Exchange (New Oxford Street), Messrs. Murdoch (Oxford Street), Messrs. Larg (New Oxford Street), and Messrs. Patterson, Sons and Co., of Edinburgh.

We leave the competition open for another month and ask our provincial readers especially to read the description again. Surely it is not so flattering a portrait as to baffle recognition of the original!



CHAMBER MUSIC *on the* GRAMOPHONE

## III.—String Quartets

By THE EDITOR

WITH string quartets we reach what in my opinion is the gramophone's greatest contribution to the enjoyment and understanding of music. I feel fairly confident that I am giving the best advice to novices, when I urge them to begin their string-quartet education with the earlier composers. In saying this I do not forget that probably the most popular movement from any string quartet is the *Andante Cantabile* from Tchaikovsky's *Quartet in D*. For me this has none of the peculiarly intimate quality of chamber music, but at the same time it undoubtedly does provide an admirable way of habituating the ear to the kind of sound emitted by two violins, a viola and violoncello. However, as I said, my advice is to begin with Haydn, and for an isolated movement I should recommend either the *Adagio Cantabile* from the *Hornpipe Quartet*, or the *Largo* from the *Quartet in D, Op. 76, No. 5*. If I were going to begin with a complete quartet I should choose the Vocalion version of the *B flat, Op. 64, No. 3*. After Haydn try Mozart. Almost any isolated movement will give pleasure to the beginner, but of the complete quartets perhaps the best to recommend to him is *No. 21 in D*, published by the Vocalion Company. The earlier Beethoven quartets may seem very like Mozart at first, but gradually the 18th century will fade away and by the time we have reached the later Beethoven quartets we are living in this modern complicated world of ours. Mozart did not belong to a period which believed in too direct an appeal to the emotions of the listeners by exploiting the emotions of the composer; but Beethoven has no hesitation about doing this. It would be impossible, I fancy, for anybody to illustrate the inner life of Mozart from the music he wrote. No biographer could say that he was either glad or sorrowful at any particular moment if there were only his music to tell him. Beethoven is the product of the sudden expansion of the human spirit that found its political expression in the French Revolution. From the time of Beethoven in music, as from the time of Rousseau in literature, directly personal expression became the corner stone of all creative work in art. Beethoven added this to a convention, and even Brahms was near enough to the self-restraint of the past to preserve what now seems to some of us an academic, even a frigid form. Since

Brahms, the complications of human existence have immeasurably increased, and much of the apparent poverty of contemporary music and literature is due to the swamping of creative artists by external circumstances. Something more, too, has been taken from the writers and composers of to-day, and that is their faith. I should not care to say that this was particularly an age of transition, because, as Goethe pointed out, every age is an age of transition; but any age in which the intellect of man is chiefly devoted not to putting in order what is or meditating on what was, but to patient efforts to discover what really is and what ultimately was, must find an echo of its empiricism in contemporary art. Every writer and every composer of to-day is fundamentally frightened to commit himself beyond his own experience; hence impressionism, psychoanalysis, autobiographical novels, the mimicry of literature by music, a drama at the point of death through the exploitation of non-dramatic situations, and a poetry concerned entirely with the expression of moods. The fact is that we are overfed and suffering from indigestion. Humanity's first attack came when Adam and Eve ate one apple; but we have stripped whole orchards bare, aye, and of the rotten fruit upon the ground we have made jam for our children. One corrective for mental, moral, and physical indigestion is a Mozart quartet. Than such music rainbows are not more calm and fair, nor fountains cooler.

ARENSKY.—*String Quartet in A minor, Op. 35a. Variations*. Catterall String Quartet, (H.M.V. D. 560). Not a very good specimen of the Catterall Quartet's work, and there is a bad scratch. The music itself is not particularly interesting.

BEETHOVEN.—*String Quartet in F, Op. 18, No. 1. Allegro con brio, Adagio affettuoso ed appassionato, Scherzo, Rondo*. (a) London String Quartet. (Col. L.1350-1). Badly cut. (b) Lyric String Quartet, (V.F. 571-3). Complete except 60 bars in the *Adagio*. (c) Catterall Quartet, (H.M.V. D.947-950). Complete. I do not know if the Columbia version has been re-recorded by the new process, but this version has been so badly cut that in any case, unless re-recorded in full, it must be superseded by the H.M.V. version. The recording of the Velvet Face is not satisfactory. The strings sometimes buzz



like Jews'-harps. The H.M.V. version which occupies seven sides of eight discs is admirable and quite complete. The playing is good, and the first violin does not behave so much like a star as Mr. Catterall's violin is sometimes apt to do. The problem of the odd side in these complete versions is difficult, but I should not have chosen Tchaikovsky's *Scherzo* to fill the eighth side. The music of this the first of Beethoven's string quartets would soothe a porcupine, and I should imagine that it would be enjoyed by the rawest novice in chamber music. In the *Finale* occurs a melody used in the third symphony.

BEETHOVEN.—*String Quartet in G Major, Op. 18, No. 2. Allegro, Adagio-Allegro, Scherzo, Allegro molto.* (a) London String Quartet (Col. L.1056, 1068). (b) Dutch String Quartet (Actuelle 15171) *Adagio* only. I fancy that the beginner might find this second quartet easier to appreciate than the first. Of course, in my version the old Columbia scratch is much in evidence, but the playing by the London String Quartet is really delightful and by using fibre one's pleasure is not much diminished by the bad surface.

BEETHOVEN.—*String Quartet in D, Op. 18, No. 3.* (a) London String Quartet, (Voc. D.02004, 8) (b) Flonzaley Quartet, (H.M.V. D.B.248), *Presto* only. This quartet shows a definite advance toward Beethoven's later period, but no doubt the beginner will vote it "duller" than either of the first two. It is not one of the most successful efforts of Vocalion recording, apart from the vile scratch. The Flonzaley snippet is marvellous.

BEETHOVEN.—*String Quartet in C minor, Op. 18, No. 4.* (a) Flonzaley String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.B.253), *Scherzo* only. (b) London String Quartet, (Col. L.1038) *Allegro* only. (c) Rosé String Quartet, (Pathé 5767) *Allegro* only. The Flonzaley snippet is exhilarating, but the *Allegro* of the London String Quartet is not a great success. The Pathé record is better.

BEETHOVEN.—*String Quartet in A, Op. 18, No. 5. Minuetto.* (a) Catterall String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.562). (b) Rosé String Quartet, (Pathé 5767). *Air and Variations.* (a) Rosé String Quartet, (Actuelle 15133) Uncut. The Pathé version of the *Minuetto* is better than the Catterall, which I don't much care for, it is very buzzy. The *Air and Variations* is one of the most beautiful things in all chamber music. The playing of the Rosé String Quartet is splendid. So is the recording apart from almost the worst scratch on any record I have. I hope we shall soon have a complete version of the fifth Quartet.

BEETHOVEN.—*String Quartet in B flat, Op. 18, No. 6. Allegro, Adagio, Scherzo, Rondo, Finale.* London String Quartet, (Voc. D.02141-2), Con-

siderable omissions, including the *Adagio* introduction to the last movement headed "La Malinconia." This has been sadly mauled and calls for re-recording. The most famous melody in the quartet, that is the interstructure and the last movement, called *La Malinconia* (Melancholy), has been cut right out. Futile! The performers are in my opinion even more culpable than the recorders.

BEETHOVEN.—*String Quartet in F, Op. 59, No. 1 (Rasumovsky) Adagio. molto e mesto.* (a) Lener String Quartet, (Col. L.1554), incomplete. A lovely melody.

BEETHOVEN.—*String Quartet in E minor, Op. 59, No. 2 (Rasumovsky) Virtuoso String Quartet (H.M.V. D.953-956), Complete.* These are glorious records of glorious music. The quality of tone is really remarkable, and the scratch not nearly so loud as in the same quartet's version of the Tchaikovsky *Quartet in D.*

BEETHOVEN.—*String Quartet in C, Op. 59, No. 3 (Rasumovsky) Fugue.* Flonzaley String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.B. 248). Exhilarating, but not quite the thing for a beginner. Brahms played this *Fugue* from memory as an encore at a concert in Vienna in 1867. What an astonishing feat!

BEETHOVEN.—*String Quartet in E flat, Op. 74, (Harp) Spencer Dyke String Quartet. (N.G.S.1924). Complete.* Beautiful playing and recording. To my thinking the *Adagio* is the loveliest slow movement in all chamber music. It was a problem to get this quartet on three records. The *Scherzo* was as usually played just too long for one side. At the rehearsal I asked Mr. Spencer Dyke if they couldn't knock 25 seconds off it in the playing. He agreed to try, and I timed them. The result is a triumphant success. The National Gramophonic Society has had many letters of congratulation on these records.

BEETHOVEN.—*String Quartet in C sharp minor, Op. 131.* (a) Lener String Quartet, (Col. L.1581-5). Complete. (b) London String Quartet. (Voc. K.05138-71). Complete.

The Lener String Quartet version is one of Columbia's greatest triumphs. Really glorious records. I am sure that they have smoothed away many difficulties that amateurs have experienced in their attempts to appreciate Beethoven's later quartets. It seems ungenerous not to praise the Vocalion version equally. But it only costs 18s. and at that price is a bargain.

BOCCHERINI.—*Minuet.* (a) Kreisler (with string quartet) H.M.V. D.A.267. (b) Philharmonic String Quartet (H.M.V. E.157). (c) Zoellner String Quartet (Edison 80608). I prefer the Philharmonic version. Kreisler takes it much too fast. It would be an acrobatic minuet at his pace.



BORODINE.—*String Quartet in D, Nocturne*. (a) Lener String Quartet, (Col. L.1512) (b) Flonzaley String Quartet H.M.V. (removed from catalogue). An entrancing melody that anybody could enjoy.

BRAHMS.—*String Quartet in C minor, Op. 51, No. 1. Allegro, Romance, (poco adagio), Allegretto molto moderato, Finale*. (a) Catterall String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.971-4). The first completely recorded string quartet. (b) Flonzaley String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.B.253) *Allegretto* only. Certainly the best thing that the Catterall Quartet has done. A neophyte of chamber music is not advised to begin with this quartet, but those who know and appreciate Brahms will not find themselves let down by these records.

BRAHMS.—*String Quartet in A minor, Op. 51, No. 2. Allegro non troppo, Andante moderato, Minuetto, Allegro non assai*. (a) London String Quartet, (Voc. D. 02110, 02137), Cut. (b) Abkov String Quartet, (World 411-2). *Andante Moderato* only, Lener String Quartet (Col. L.1520). Cut. Much easier to follow than the first quartet, and there is some charming playing in the Vocalion version, though it is very badly cut.

BRAHMS.—*String Quartet in B flat, Op. 67, No. 3. Andante and Agitato*. London String Quartet, (Col. L.1151). *Andante*. Eweler String Quartet, (Parlo. E.10195). *Agitato*. Catterall String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.594). I do not know the Columbia version, but I strongly recommend the Parlophone *Andante*, which is complete. The *Agitato* is a good example of the Catterall Quartet's work.

BRIDGE, FRANK.—*Novelettes. Nos. 1 and 3*. Spencer Dyke Quartet, (Voc. D.02155).

BRIDGE, FRANK.—*Three Idylls*. Virtuoso String Quartet, (H.M.V. D. 915-6). *Three Idylls, Nos. 2 and 3*. London String Quartet, (Voc. R.6110).

BRIDGE, FRANK.—*Phantaisie Quartet. Allegro moderato and Finale*. The English String Quartet, (Col. 946). This music does not appeal to me. I am incapable of appreciating its technique and so find it dull and devitalised.

DEBUSSY.—*String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10*. (a) Spencer Dyke String Quartet, (N.G.S. 1924), (b) Abkov String Quartet, (World 409). *Andante* only—(a) London String Quartet, (Col. D.1004), (b) Lener String Quartet, (Col. L.1530), (c) Catterall String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.651), (e) Dutch String Quartet, (Actuelle, 15171). The *Andante* is one of the most popular of all snippets, but the rest of the quartet is not a whit less attractive. The Spencer Dyke Quartet gives a very fine performance, and the recording is splendid.

DITTERSDORF.—*String Quartet in E flat. Allegro (Finale)*. Elman String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.A.174).

*String Quartet in G major. Andante*. Elman String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.B.238). The *Allegro* is dull, but the *Andante* is a good, rich tone, and I strongly recommend it to a beginner.

DVORÁK.—*String Quartet in F, Op. 96 (Nigger Quartet)*. Abkov String Quartet, (World 415-6) *Lento* only. (a) Lener String Quartet, (Col. L. 1465), (b) Flonzaley String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.B.658), (c) Grete Eweler Quartet, (Parlo. E.10218). *Lento* and *Scherzo*. New York String Quartet (Brunswick 25015). I recommend the Parlophone snippet, which is complete. This is another rich tune, the third movement reminds me in parts of the ballad, *Twickenham Ferry*.

GLAZOUNOV.—*Novelettes, Op. 15. No. 2. Orientale, No. 5, All' ungherese*. English String Quartet, (Col. 940). *No. 3, Interludium, in modo antico*. Flonzaley String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.B.251), *No. 4. Valse*. Virtuoso String Quartet, (H.M.V. 868). Much the loveliest of these *Novelettes* is the *Interludium*, marvellously played by the Flonzaley Quartet. The *Valse* is pleasant; it forms the last side of the complete Tchaikovsky quartet.

GLAZOUNOV.—“*Slav Quartet*” in *G, Op. 26. Interludium, Alla Mazurka*. London String Quartet, (Col.L.1031). Rather dull.

GLAZOUNOV.—*Suite, Op. 35. No. 2, Scherzo, No. 5, Valse*. London String Quartet, (Voc. R.6077). Rather dull.

GLINKA.—*String Quartet in F. Minuet*. Catterall String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.646). Pleasant.

GRIEG.—*String Quartet in G minor, Op. 27. Romance*. London String Quartet, (Col. L.1029). Pleasant.

HAYDN.—*String Quartet in F, Op. 3, No. 5. Serenade (Andante Cantabile)*, Lener String Quartet (Col. L. 1465). Delicious. Practically a solo for the first violin.

HAYDN.—*String Quartet in C, Op. 20, No. 2. Menuetto*. Eweler String Quartet, (Parlo. E.10164). Attractive and typical.

HAYDN.—*String Quartet in B flat, Op. 64, No. 3. Vivace assai, Adagio, Menuetto, Allegretto con spirito (Finale)*. London String Quartet, (Voc. D.02020, 02039). Beautifully played and the beginner might do worse than invest in this as his first more or less complete quartet.

HAYDN.—*String Quartet in D, Op. 64, No. 5. (“Hornpipe Quartet”)*. *Allegro moderato, Adagio cantabile, Menuetto, Finale (Vivace)*. London String Quartet, (Col. L.1443-4). First and second cut, third and fourth complete. *First and second movements*. Flonzaley String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.B.250). First complete, second slightly cut. *Second and Fourth Movements*. Lener String Quartet, (Col. L.1574), second cut, fourth complete. *Second*



*Movement.* Zoellner String Quartet, (Edison 80600). *Fourth Movement*, Dutch String Quartet, (Actuelle 15165). The Columbia version is not good. The Flonzaley version of the lovely *Adagio Cantabile* is the best.

HAYDN.—*String Quartet in E flat, Op. 64, No. 6. Allegretto, Andante, Menuetto, Finale (Presto).* English String Quartet, (Col. 937-8), second movement cut. *Andante* only. Eweler String Quartet, (Parlo. E.10164), complete. A delicious quartet at a popular price and much to be recommended.

HAYDN.—*String Quartet in G, Op. 76, No. 1.* Catterall String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.594). A delicious melody. (Withdrawn from catalogue.)

HAYDN.—*String Quartet in C, Op. 76, No. 3. ("Emperor Quartet") Andante.* Elman String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.B.651). *Praise the Lord, ye heavens adore Him* or the Austrian national anthem.

HAYDN.—*String Quartet in D, Op. 76, No. 5. Allegretto, Largo, Menuetto, Finale.* Lener String Quartet, (Col. L.1559-61). Complete. *Largo.* (a) Catterall String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.562). (b) Dutch String Quartet, (Pathé 789, Actuelle 15165). The complete quartet is exquisite. The *Largo* is one of the richest tunes in music.

HOLBROOKE, JOSEPH.—*Serenade from "Belgium, 1915," Op. 59a.* London String Quartet (Col. D.1408). I have not heard this.

HOLBROOKE.—*Folk Song Quartet.* London String Quartet, (Col. D. 1408). An attractive record containing *Come, lasses and lads, We all love a pretty girl under the rose*, and *Simon the Cellarer* woven together.

HOWELLS, HERBERT.—*Lady Audrey's Suite. The Little Girl and The Old Shepherd.* Catterall String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.646). Dainty and charming, but surely rather an echo of the last movement of the Tchaikovsky *Quartet in D*?

McEWEN.—*Four Dances.* Spencer Dyke String Quartet, (Voc. R.6140). Good playing, but not attractive music.

MENDELSSOHN.—*String Quartet in E flat, Op. 12, No. 1. Allegro non tardante, Canzonetta, Andante espressivo, molto allegro e vivace.* London String Quartet, (Voc. 02062-3). *Canzonetta.* (a) Flonzaley String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.A.210). (b) Philharmonic String Quartet, (H.M.V. E.153). The jolliest part of this quartet is the *Canzonetta*, of which the Flonzaley gives a delicious rendering. I find the rest a little dull.

MENDELSSOHN.—*String Quartet in E minor, Op. 44, No. 2. Scherzo (Allegro molto),* Lener String Quartet, (Col. L. 1566). Rather dull, but there is a lovely snippet from Schumann's *Quartet in A* on the other side of the record.

MOZART.—*String Quartet in D, No. 21 (Peter's Edition). Allegretto, Andante, Menuetto, Allegretto.* London String Quartet, (Voc. D.02013-4). First and last movements substantially but judiciously cut. *Andante* and *Menuetto.* Flonzaley String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.B.249-254), uncut. Such a lovely quartet. It is a pity that the two movements played by the Flonzaley Quartet are not on the same record. This is one of many instances in which the double-sided celebrity records try to eat their cake and have it. I strongly recommend the Vocalion rendering to any purchaser who cannot afford both. This quartet was one of those composed for the King of Prussia with a view to his favourite instrument, the violoncello. There is no trace of the composer's terrible worries over money from which he was suffering at the time.

MOZART.—*String Quartet No. 6 in C. Adagio-Allegro, Andante Cantabile, Menuetto, Allegretto Molto Allegro.* Lener String Quartet, (Col. L. 1545-8). Complete. Lovely throughout. The opening *Adagio* upset Prince Grassalkowics, "who tore up the parts in a rage at finding that they really contained the hideous stuff that was being played before him." Another critic found it too highly spiced!

MOZART.—*String Quartet No. 12, in G. Allegro. Menuetto, Andante Cantabile, Molto Allegro. First Movement.* Catterall String Quartet, (H.M.V. D.260). Cut. *Third Movement*, (second half only). Lener String Quartet, (Col. L.1530). *Fourth Movement.* (a) Flonzaley String Quartet, (H.M.V. D. 252). Complete. (b) Lener String Quartet, (Col. L.1460). Complete. It is a pity we cannot complete this entrancing quartet. The *first* movement is one of the gayest bits of music in the world. I hope that later pressings of it are better than mine, which now looks like a golf course. The *Andante* is beautifully played by the Lener Quartet. I recommend the Flonzaley for the last movement because the Lener version, which was the first to be issued, has two or three bad flaws, so that once or twice it sounds as if a pig was being killed in a neighbouring field.

MOZART.—*String Quartet No. 13, in D minor. Allegro moderato and Andante.* London String Quartet (Col. D.1427). Cut. *Minuetto.* (a) Catterall String Quartet (H.M.V. D.630). (b) Elman String Quartet (H.M.V. D.A.174). *Allegretto non troppo.* (a) Lener String Quartet (Col. L.1520). (b) Flonzaley Quartet (H.M.V. D.B.251). Uncut. We can build up a fairly complete version of this quartet, every movement of which is attractive. In deciding between the Lener and the Flonzaley versions of the last movement the reader should be governed by what he wants most on the other side.

MOZART.—*String Quartet No. 14, in E flat. Allegro, Andante, Menuetto, Allegro vivace.* London



String Quartet (Col. L.1043-4). *Menuetto* only. Elman String Quartet (H.M.V. D.B.238).

MOZART.—*String Quartet No. 15, in B flat. Allegro vivace assai, Menuetto, Adagio, Allegro assai.* London String Quartet (Col. L.1330-1). Cut. *Allegro vivace assai* only. Lener String Quartet (Col. L.1554). These two quartets were early Columbia recordings and I do not yet know if they have been re-recorded by the new process. They are both as melodious as all Mozart's quartets are. As I write this the B flat has arrived in a Lener rendering complete on four records. Perfectly exquisite.

MOZART.—*String Quartet No. 18, in D.* Abkov String Quartet (World, 414-5). I have not heard this.

NOVÁČEK.—*String Quartet in E, Op. 10. Andante.* Catterall String Quartet (H.M.V. D.630). Only fairly attractive.

RAVEL.—*String Quartet in F. Très lent, Agité. First Movement.* London String Quartet (Col. L.1038). *Third and Fourth Movements.* London String Quartet (Col. L.1163). I like the Ravel Quartet better than the Debussy, but my records of it unfortunately date from the day when Columbia records were at their scratchiest, and the shimmering string effects suffer from it more than any kind of music. We should welcome a complete version from the Lener Quartet.

RUBINSTEIN.—*String Quartet in C minor, Op. 17, No. 2 ("Music of the Spheres"). Molto lento (in A flat).* Flonzaley String Quartet (H.M.V. D.A.601). Dull.

SAINT-SAËNS.—*Piano Quartet in B flat, Op. 41. Scherzo.* Hambourg, Hayward, Evans, Bridge (H.M.V. D.62). Dull.

SCONTRINO.—*String Quartet in A minor, Minuet and Romanza.* London String Quartet (Col. L.1321). Delightful.

SCHUBERT.—*String Quartet in C minor, No. 12. First Movement.* London String Quartet (Col. L.1015). An easy and pleasant tune.

SCHUBERT.—*String Quartet in A minor, Op. 29. Minuet.* Elman String Quartet (H.M.V. D.B.652). An attractive record.

SCHUBERT.—*String Quartet in D minor. ("Death and the Maiden.")* Abkov String Quartet (World 408-9). *Andante con moto (Variations).* (a) Lener String Quartet (Col. L.1460). (b) Philharmonic String Quartet (H.M.V. D.88). The Lener snippet has one or two bad flaws like its companion on the other side from Mozart's No. 12 in G. The Philharmonic record is very ancient.

SCHUMANN.—*String Quartet in A minor, Op. 41, No. 1. Scherzo.* Flonzaley String Quartet (H.M.V. D.B.249). A glorious piece of playing, but my record has an odious hiss at the end.

SCHUMANN.—*String Quartet in F, Op. 41, No. 2. Andante.* Catterall String Quartet (H.M.V. D.597). Has the Jew's-harp effect, which is the fault of several of the earlier Catterall Quartet records.

SCHUMANN.—*String Quartet in A, Op. 41, No. 3. Allegro molto moderato, Assa agitato. Adagio molto, Finale.* London String Quartet (Col. L.1199, 1200). *Second Movement.* Flonzaley String Quartet (H.M.V. D.B.252). Uncut. *Third Movement.* Lener String Quartet (Col. L.1566). Cut. I have an idea that the Columbia version is out of circulation at present. The other two movements are beautifully played by the Flonzaley and the Lener Quartets. The *Adagio* is a romantic and moving melody.

SMETANA.—*String Quartet in E minor. ("Aus meinem Leben.")* (a) London String Quartet (Voc. D.02097, 02101). (b) Leo Abkov String Quartet (World 412-3). *Allegro moderato a la polka.* Flonzaley String Quartet (H.M.V. D.B.658). I don't much care for the Vocalion version, either as recording or playing. The Flonzaley snippet is marvellous.

SPEAIGHT, JOSEPH.—*Lonely Shepherd.* London String Quartet (Col. L.1029). I don't possess this.

TANIEIEV.—*String Quartet in A minor, Op. 11. Scherzo.* Catterall String Quartet (H.M.V. D.651). This is attractive.

TCHAIKOVSKY.—*String Quartet in D major, Op. 11. Moderato e semplice, Andante Cantabile, Scherzo, Finale.* Virtuoso String Quartet (H.M.V. D.865). *Second Movement.* (a) London String Quartet (Col. L.1004). (b) Elman String Quartet (H.M.V. D.B.652) (c) Philharmonic String Quartet (H.M.V. E.157). (d) Eweler String Quartet (Parlo. E.10165). (e) Kreisler and String Quartet (H.M.V. D.B.588). *Third Movement.* (a) London String Quartet (Col. L.1015). (b) Lener String Quartet (Col. L.1512). In spite of the dreadful scratch the Virtuoso Quartet's performance is one of the best things we have in chamber music. The tone is very fine. I suppose I ought to recommend which of the many versions of the *Andante Cantabile* is the best, and as the Parlophone is the most complete and the cheapest I shall vote for that, though the Philharmonic version, which has a charming rendering of the Boccherini *Minuet* on the other side is well worthy of attention.

TCHAIKOVSKY.—*String Quartet in F, Op. 22. Scherzo.* Catterall String Quartet (H.M.V. D.597). A good piece of playing.

TCHAIKOVSKY.—*String Quartet in E flat minor, Op. 30, No. 3. Scherzo.* Flonzaley String Quartet (H.M.V. D.A.601). But this is better.

WALDO, WARNER.—*String Quartet in C minor, Op. 15, No. 2.* London String Quartet (Voc. D.02088, 02092). Rather dull.

WALDO, WARNER.—*Folk Song Fantasy* ("Dance to your Daddy"). London String Quartet (Col. L.1245). I have not heard this.

#### QUINTETS AND OTHER CHAMBER MUSIC.

BRAHMS.—*Clarinet Quintet in B minor, Op. 115. Allegro and Adagio piu lento.* London String Quartet and Draper (Col. L.1219). This is very beautiful, but apt to hoot on some instruments unless played with fibre.

DVORÁK.—*Piano Quintet in A, Op. 81. Dumka (Andante, con moto), Scherzo (Molto vivace).* This has apparently disappeared from the catalogue, which is a pity.

FAURÉ.—*Piano Quartet in C minor, Op. 15.* Beatrice Hewett Piano Quartet (H.M.V. D.741-2). Incomplete. A very attractive couple of discs, and the recording is admirable. It is regrettable that it was not issued complete as it is unlikely to be recorded again for some time. There are some charming melodies.

MOZART.—*String Quintet No. 3 in G minor. Allegro, Menuetto, Adagio ma non troppo, Adagio, Allegro.* London String Quartet and Alfred Hobday (Col. L.1362-4). Substantially but judiciously cut. These lovely records, which were recorded during the daylight air raid, are to my thinking the best which the London String Quartet have done. What music!

SCHUMANN.—*Piano Quintet in B flat, Op. 44. Allegro brillante, Un poco largamente, Scherzo, Allegro ma non troppo.* London String Quartet and Ethel Hobday (Voc. J.04114-5). *Scherzo.* Hambourg, Hayward, Evans, Kinze, Bridge (H.M.V. D.62). It is a pity that this quintet was not re-

corded in full, for the performance is excellent and the recording, apart from a scratch, some of the best that the Vocalion has done. I have a peculiar affection for these records (originally published on four single sides making the incompleteness more inexcusable) because they were the ones that converted me to the gramophone. I first played them in March, 1922, have played them many, many times since, and to my ear they have lost none of their brilliance. I consider that a great tribute to the wear of the Vocalion records. Novices of chamber music should make particular note of this quintet which, as Sir Henry Hadow once said, is like a very good novel full of incident.

BYRD, WILLIAM.—*Fantasia for String Sextet.* Byrd String Sextet (H.M.V. E.293). I should describe this as more interesting than pleasant.

RAVEL.—*Septet for harp, string quartet, flute and clarinet.* G. Maso, R. Murchie, H. P. Draper, etc. (Col. L.1518-9). An extremely pleasant series of noises, with one snatch of melody very reminiscent of César Franck. A lot of space is wasted, which makes it expensive.

THUILLE.—*Sextet.* London Wind Quartet with piano (V.F. 612-3). Not very interesting music. I cannot understand why the Velvet Face people do not encourage this wonderful combination to look through a little Mozart, not to mention Beethoven.

COMPTON MACKENZIE.

[NOTE.—I must warn new readers that I am working on my own collection of records at Jethou, and that several of them have probably been either withdrawn from catalogues or else re-recorded with better surfaces.—C.M.]



### Acknowledgments

A "Collaro" motor (double spring, model M.3A) has been fitted to the office Vocarola, and our expert Committee is trying to devise a means for testing its endurance without driving the staff mad by crowding six months' normal exercise into a few days. For the moment it is enough to say that the motor is beautiful to the eye and promises extremely well.

Mr. Vartz, familiar to most of our readers as a genius in sound-box construction, has added to the orchestral and vocal boxes which he has given to the London office by the promise of a special "chamber music box," which will be highly appreciated. All these boxes are made specifically

to suit the H.M.V. school model which—when its needle-track alignment has been corrected—will be regarded as the standard at the office for the judging of other gramophones.

Among other innovations lately submitted to the London office were a rough model of a record-holder (by Major Radford), which keeps records upright between cardboard sheets with clamped rods and is easy to use and to adapt to shelves or cabinets, though it is no great advance on other recognised methods of storing records; and a bottle of Orchorsol Liquid Polish (1s.) which has been tried on an old office desk with so little harm that we are going to use it on the gramophones and the Sesame and the Jussrite, which are all slightly lack-lustre.



# IS MODERN MUSIC ANY GOOD?

By PERCY A. SCHOLES

I RECEIVE a good many letters like the following:

I have been trying to find out what the modern composers are "getting at" and up to the present I must confess that I am as much in the dark as ever, or more so. Probably I have no modern musical soul. Can't help it if it is so. I hate jazz and can't say I like the modern stuff much better. It seems to be mechanically clever, and that is all. Yet I am very fond of Wagner's music and don't care for what is usually termed popular music. No doubt there are many others in similar case. Could you manage to allude to this matter?

Now I hold no brief for the modern composers. My idea is that some of their work is very good and some of it very bad, and that until we get used to their style (or rather their many different styles) it remains very difficult to judge of their value.

I recommend to my correspondent my own plan—listen patiently, and listen to as much modern music as you can, and be sure that time will sift the good from the bad.

This correspondent, you note, says, "I am very fond of Wagner's music."

He will recall that when Wagner first began to depart from the old paths, the term "Music of the Future" was invented, and used as a term of opprobrium, just as to-day the word "futurist" is used.

Remember that music has never stood still, and be sure that it never will stand still. But remember also (what some of the composers perhaps forget) that it doesn't follow that because a man is moving rapidly he is going in the right direction. Incidentally, when you hear a piece of modern music give your whole thought to it. Put yourself in a receptive state of mind. Try to understand what is being played or sung.

Here is another letter:

I am forty years of age. Have no knowledge of music, and cannot play an instrument of any kind. I never tried. Yet I have worshipped at the shrine for over twenty years.

During that time I have heard all the great works of the Old Masters, whom I simply adore. I am so well acquainted with the symphonies of the various schools that, in my own way, I can hum or whistle part of almost any movements of these great works. I should also include in this exposition of myself my great admiration for the great sonatas.

Now to my point. My adoration for these great works ceases when I reach the late Wagner period. I can enjoy Wagner as a whole up to, but not including "Tristan." Just the other evening I heard the Scottish Orchestra,

under the baton of Koussevitski, play the "Prelude" and "Liebestod" parts of *Tristan*, which I have heard very often. I don't like them.

Some parts of *The Ring* and *Parsifal* I do like, but not to the extent of the great adoration I feel for the older school. The same thing applies to the modern English school, including Elgar.

There is one notable exception among the moderns; with my unfading love for the Old Masters, I should like to bracket the name of Tchaikovsky. His symphonies, suites, etc., hold me in a spell.

Now for the query: What is wrong with me? Have I reached the zenith of my musical evolution in regard to my appreciatory powers to enjoy the beauties of that heavenly art? If I have, I am still quite satisfied, for I have drunk deep from the ever-refreshing stream of the old dearly beloved masters of long ago.

I have tried hard, and without prejudice to appreciate the moderns, but have persistently failed.

"What is wrong" with this listener, as he himself asks? Nothing much, I think!

To begin with, he is evidently really trying to give the music a chance.

And he has already been well rewarded, for he has been able to add to his life the pleasures of appreciation of the symphonies and sonatas of Mozart, Beethoven and others, and also of a good deal of the music of Wagner.

There is nothing remarkable in his not caring greatly for *Tristan* and *Parsifal*. I myself (though many will differ from me) am inclined to rank these works below *The Mastersingers* which is, to me, Wagner's great masterpiece.\* In both *Tristan* and *Parsifal*, wonderful as is much of their music, there is a distinct vein of passionate excess, which is entirely lacking in the straightforward open-air-like *Mastersingers*.

And so one might discuss Wagner's works, one by one, showing how it is quite reasonable to expect that some people should prefer certain of them and other people others.

I personally do not agree that Tchaikovsky is quite the genius that our friend probably takes him to be. In much of his work he also shows what I have called "passionate excess," but, since many people enjoy Wagner's *Tristan* who do not enjoy Tchaikovsky's *Pathetic Symphony*, it is only to be

\* Nearly everybody who has ever heard it loves *The Mastersingers*. Nowadays it is as clear as crystal—full of lively melody, rich, bold harmony and brilliant orchestration. Yet when it first appeared it was a good deal criticised in some quarters, and one Berlin critic asserted that "if all the organ grinders in Berlin were shut in a circus and started grinding, each a different tune, the result would be less horrible than *Die Meistersinger*" (Dunstan's Dictionary; article Wagner).



expected that others should enjoy the *Pathetic Symphony* who do not enjoy *Tristan*.

You cannot rule out personal taste in music any more than you can rule it out in anything in life. Our friend is entitled to his preferences.

And these preferences he will find change as time goes on. He has been listening twenty years, and we may hope that he will be listening for another twenty or forty. It is quite certain that during that period he will to some extent change his political views and perhaps his religious views. He will learn to think more of authors of whom he does not yet think much, and to think less of authors of whom he now thinks a good deal. And the same thing will happen with his musical appreciation. Probably Elgar, for whom he now cares little, will become one of his favourites. How much Elgar has he yet heard? The two symphonies are unfortunately so rarely done, that if he has heard each of them four times (say), that is probably the extent of his knowledge of their style and contents. And his hearings of them have certainly been separated by long periods, so that each occasion has been almost a starting-afresh. When the time comes (as it probably will) when one of the Elgar symphonies is broadcast every month, he will have a better chance and then his judgment of Elgar, favourable or unfavourable, will be more trustworthy—i.e., it will, at last, become a "considered judgment."

As for Elgar's contemporary, Strauss, the same thing will happen. Those of us who have had the opportunity of hearing much Strauss have come to consider certain works as head and shoulders above the rest, and we nearly all agree as to which works deserve this honour, thinking, too, as time goes on, less and less of the other works. Solid judgments and lasting appreciation are not always to be arrived at overnight! The London *Musical World* in 1856, demolished three contemporary composers, in one devastating paragraph—Wagner, Schumann, and Brahms:

*Lohengrin* is a bad thing, *Paradise and the Peri* is a bad thing, and the sonata of Brahms is a very bad thing; but . . . they have nothing in common but this badness.

Five years had then elapsed since the first performance of Wagner's *Lohengrin* (nineteen more were to elapse before its first British performance!); thirteen had elapsed since the production of Schumann's *Paradise and the Peri*, but it had in that very year, 1856, had its first hearing in London; which of the sonatas of Brahms is referred to I do not know, but his earliest had been before the public only a year or two. Here then is an example of hasty judgment, and one which, were the writer now living, he would probably unreservedly retract; indeed, he might easily turn himself into a defender of the very three composers mentioned,

against the attacks of the wild young men of to-day who condemn them as out-of-date.

Some pieces of music can, it is true, be judged at once—but these are generally the unoriginal ones. Every ounce of originality in a work is an ounce of extra difficulty for the listener who wishes to appraise it. We professional music critics, with our constant opportunities of gaining experience, have the best chance—yet (whisper it!) we sometimes go wrong, the more liberal-minded of us tending to welcome every novel work as a great work, and the more conservative of us to damn that very work for its very novelty. Stravinsky is probably a case in point. His "idiom" was, in many respects novel, and as new works appeared it became increasingly so. Hence, it is probable that some of us, dazzled by this, have over-praised him and others, blinded by it, have underrated him.

All this explains why no sensible critic, however dogmatic his utterance, expects or wishes everybody to accept his every word as gospel truth. Indeed, the principle is pretty generally recognised amongst us that the best critic is the one who stirs people to think for themselves. "Every man his own Critic" is the ideal! We professional critics of the country should merely be the leaders amongst a host of amateur critics, each using a pretty independent mind of his own.

In music, as in every branch of human activity, great changes are now in progress. And a time of change, political or musical, is not, on the whole, a comfortable time. Listeners who look upon music merely as an amusement (the counterpart of the people who look upon a book as merely "a bit of good reading") cannot be expected to listen patiently to music that is new in its manner of expression. But more adventurous listeners, those who have realised the pleasures of exploration, will welcome opportunities of hearing the most modern music, and even where they fail to enjoy will at least applaud the spirit of enterprise of the man who made it.

Surely that is the right attitude! And it is one that has this great merit—it gives youth a chance!

There was a certain British Prime Minister who, in 1924, at the opening of an exhibition of pictures, uttered these words:

He was not sure that, either publicly or privately, we gave enough recognition to the contemporary artists. The Old Masters were very fine, but we could not live on the Old Masters alone. If the generations, as they came, could not produce works that would in due time pass into the accepted galleries of the Old Masters, then art was dead and not alive.

Herein we must all, surely, agree with Mr. MacDonald.

PERCY A. SCHOLES.



# A NOTE ON PIANO RECORDING

By HAROLD CRAXTON

IT is splendid to notice that at last successful attempts have been made to improve the reproduction of the most abused, and at the same time most used instrument in recording—the piano.

For so long quite faithful pictures of voice and string have been allied, and marred by the most unlike piano sounds that one could imagine. It was obvious that such a state of affairs could not exist, if the gramophone was to be taken seriously. The “mere accompanist’s” efforts were made to sound less than “mere accompaniments” and all balance lost. But now a great improvement has set in and it seems possible to record voice and piano with proper balance, and on equal terms, when demanded by the composer.

This improvement has been greatly helped by the keen and intelligent criticism that has been brought to bear by THE GRAMOPHONE, and others, who do not hesitate to condemn the inferior output of any company; and though the words may be hard at times, they are always helpful and honest, and in the end the companies will be indebted to those who give such useful criticism.

It has been my privilege recently to be associated with Miss Elena Gerhardt in a set of records of

*Lieder* for the Vocalion. The recording seems to me to be on a very high level and the piano to be given a fair share in the song. It was also a pleasant task to assist in the records of the Schubert *E flat Trio* with Mr. Spencer Dyke and Mr. Patterson Parker for the National Gramophone Society. The recording of piano part is again on a higher standard than usual.

Do people realise the difficulties which beset the course of the record-maker? The three or four minutes’ work to which one listens, may have taken a great deal of time and patience to make under trying conditions. A word or a high note recorded

a little too close to the machine—a slight whistle from the violin string through the temperature of the room or player’s hand—a note on the piano in unison with the voice (which in an ordinary performance would reinforce the voice, but in recording jars the soloist’s tone)—a few seconds beyond the stop watch limit—any of these mis-

adventures involves a re-recording of the whole.

And how difficult it is to repeat the same emotions, to keep the freshness of performance after many repetitions! No wonder our efforts may sound at times a little self-conscious. Just as one produces a specially stiff expression, when the camera-man says “Smile, please!” for the fourth time, so there is a danger, when the sound camera is focussed upon one’s playing, that a stiffness of expression and lack of freedom may sometimes appear in the third or fourth repetition which eventually reaches the public on the record.

But now for a word about the joys of recording with Miss Elena Gerhardt and my colleagues, Spencer Dyke and Patterson Parker. Work was easy, for musicianship was always to the fore. Miss Gerhardt has such a fine sense of rhythm and so clear a phrase, and her

whole art is so balanced emotionally and intellectually that an *ensemble* was an easy matter. Her *rubato* never breaks the rhythmic line and for this blessing the “man at the piano” gives thanks!

The *Trio* of Schubert was a quite difficult piece of work to record, with its passages of great speed at the extreme ends of the piano compass, and its curious repeated note passages, so easy on the violin and ‘cello, but so awkward on the keyboard. But with such masters of *ensemble* playing as Mr. Dyke and Mr. Parker, the task was lightened to a great degree and I trust that the result of our work will be received with a sympathetic hearing and approval.

H. C.



ELENA GERHARDT.



# ARCHIVES IN SOUND

## An Account of the Work of the "Phonogram-Archives" in Vienna

By HANS POLLAK, D.Phil. (Vienna).

THESE is nothing so fleeting as sound. The spoken word dies away as soon as spoken, and the rarest notes called forth from the violin are gone for ever before the bow is laid aside. We can set the air vibrating easily enough, but before we can stay the waves they have ebbed away. This sense of the elusiveness of sound is what made so impressive the invention of the phonograph in 1877.

The phonograph enables sounds to be "fixed" in a material known as wax, in such a way that they can be drawn forth again at will. But a comparatively long time elapsed after Thomas Alva Edison's first great invention, before the sciences to which it can be of greatest service began to make real use of it. In the forefront of such sciences are philology, in the widest sense of the word (including linguistics and the study of human speech) and the comparative study of music. Only since the end of last century have comprehensive collections of phonographic records been systematically made. One of the oldest of existing bodies concerned with such work is the phonographic records department of the Academy of Sciences in Vienna—the "Phonogram Archives" (*Phonogramm-Archiv*) as it is called.

The idea of founding this unusual kind of scientific collection came from the Vienna physiologist Sigmund Exner, who is now at the head of the Vienna Phonogram Archives Committee. The special instrument used in Vienna for making records for the Archives is called the "Archive phonograph," and is similar to Edison's. The main difference is that the records are made on discs and not on cylinders, but the instrument is no "gramophone," as the method of recording is Edison's; that is to say, the sound-waves are recorded vertically in the thickness of the wax, and their ordinates are at right angles to the surface of the wax to which the oscillating diaphragm is parallel. By a galvanic process a copper "negative" is made from the original record, and then nickelled over; and from this matrix, as many "positives" as wanted can be made.

It is these "negatives," these metal matrixes, which are the valuable part of the Phonogram Archives. They will last for hundreds, or perhaps thousands, of years. They show great resistance even to fire. An experiment was tried of exposing one of them for several hours to a very hot flame,

and afterwards casting a record from it. The record was found to be in parts still perfectly clear.

To-day the Phonogram Archives contain more than 3000 records, of which a careful catalogue up to the number 2000 has been already published and is being further proceeded with. As well as being a collection, the Archives are an important research laboratory, as shown by the 50 and more scientific publications issued to date by the Phonogram Archives Committee. The records are classified into four main groups; records of philological interest, records of musical interest, "voice-portraits" of famous persons, and records of special interest to students of medicine and physics.

At present it is the philological collection which is the richest. It contains specimen records of languages and dialects from all over the world. The most fully represented group of dialects are those of Austria and German Switzerland, which number well over 100. The systematic recording of the Austrian dialects was begun by the late Joseph Seemüller, of the University of Vienna, and the method of procedure is somewhat as follows:

If varieties of German are to be recorded, first a simple piece of ordinary German prose is selected, the same for every speaker. After being read by the speaker, it is repeated by him more or less freely in his own way, some phrases being spontaneously "translated" into the manner of speech natural to him. Next the speaker is asked to tell about something characteristic of his own particular district, to describe its agriculture, or relate some local incident or legend. Alongside of each phonographic record thus made, a careful statement is drawn up in writing; the circumstances in which the record was taken are set forth, and the exact nationality of the speaker given; and the actual spoken text is also set down word for word, if possible in phonetic script as well. As a general rule, a record is only incorporated in the collection when the written statement is entirely flawless and the whole experiment has been scientifically controlled. Thus the well-known story of Tell, for instance, is repeated in several dialects, and the experimenter can put the several records on different machines alongside one another and listen to the same sentence, spoken here in one way and there in



another, and can study at leisure the various ways in which they deviate from each other: for of course the phonogram reproduces with absolute accuracy every accent of the speaker—the way he stresses his words as well as the way he pronounces them, the natural cadence into which he falls, his tone, the difference between his long and short accentuations, his instinctive variations of speed, and so on.

The Archives have been much helped in the collecting of dialects by the allied institute at the University of Zürich, which has been energetically engaged in the work for some fifteen years. German, Provençal, Italian and Rhæto-Romanic dialects have been systematically phonographed in Zürich, and permanent negatives made in Vienna from the records. The negatives are kept in Vienna, and the records can be heard at either Vienna or Zürich.

Of the other Germanic languages, Swedish is at present the best represented, but a collection of English records from various parts of the English-speaking world is in process of being made, in which even Pigeon-English will not be lacking! It would be, of course, impossible to give anything like a full list here of all the languages in the collection, but one may mention some of the most curious ones; as for instance the Spanish of Paraguay, the "Spaniolish" of the Balkan Jews, and a fine collection of all the surviving Celtic dialects—Welsh, Irish, Gaelic, Manx and Breton. A point has been made of securing first of all, as far as possible, dialects which are dying out. In a few years the Manx or Basque records, for example, will be of unique historical value.

A particularly valuable set of phonograms is the collection of Sanskrit records, made by the meteorologist, Felix Exner, while on a scientific expedition in India in 1904. He was assisted in the work by various students and scholars, including Colonel H. S. Olcott, of the Theosophical Society, and others. Records were made in Madras, Bombay, Benares, and Calcutta, nearly seventy in all. As is well known, in the Brahmin priest schools great value is set upon handing down the exact pronunciation of this time-honoured language from generation to generation. Among the records may be heard recitations coming midway between speech and song, and showing transitions from one to the other, which throw a very interesting light on the relation between music and speech in general. From these records it is clear that a certain peculiar musical beat is characteristic of all spoken Sanskrit. Various kinds of metre can be studied from these records. There are recitations from the *Mahabharata*, from the *Vedas*, etc., and also a few samples of modern Indian dialects.

Among records of the speech of primitive peoples, those of the Kalahari Bushmen and of certain New Guinea natives may be mentioned. Both of these

series the Archives owe to the late Rudolf Pöch, the well-known ethnographer and anthropologist. It is of the greatest scientific importance that the language of the ancient race of the Bushmen, now almost extinct, should have been preserved from oblivion. It is of peculiar interest phonetically, and in these records the "clicks" and other characteristic sounds can be plainly heard. Such records are of enormous value, not only for the student of phonetics and philology in general, but also for the ethnologist and student of folk-lore. Some of these are supplemented by a photograph, showing the speaker, or the situation to which his words refer.

Turning to the group of musical records, we find that these, too, cover an extremely wide field. The developed musical art of Western Europe is not yet represented in the Archives to any great extent, though Alpine jodellers can be heard, and some folk-songs of the so-called "cultured peoples." With modern Western music the Archives have not hitherto been much concerned, and the great feature of their musical department so far is the wonderfully rich collection of exotic records from far countries. New Guinea natives can be heard at play, amusing themselves with bamboo flutes and mouth-drums. There is a collection of Zulu songs, made for the Archives in Pietermaritzburg in 1908 by the missionary Father Mayr, in which are dancing war-songs, marriage-songs, hunting-songs, laments, and Christian hymns sung by Zulu girls. Some of the songs refer to the war with the English in 1879. In contrast to the wild Zulu songs are the plaintive sounds of the "bombarde" and "cornemuse" of Brittany, and the Scottish and Irish bagpipes. One curious series of records shows the various ways of chanting from the Bible practised by certain Eastern Jews, which presents a field of study interesting to the philologist, the ethnologist, and the musician alike. Of course many of the other series are of equally many-sided interest—the Sanskrit series, for example, or the Hungarian "Regös" songs sung on New Year's night, which are supposed to date from heathen times.

Before the war the Vienna Phonogram Archives were able to make records all over the world, and though not actually to maintain expeditions, at least to pay the expenses involved in the actual taking of records. At the outbreak of war the Archives possessed material in various countries which even yet has not all been fetched home, owing to lack of means. The obstacles to intercourse with foreign countries during the last ten years have unfortunately hampered the progress of the Archives considerably. Yet even during these bad times they were not altogether idle, and war conditions they turned to account in the following original way.

The old Czarist Russia which was at war with Austro-Hungary embraced, like the Soviet Republics of to-day, numerous peoples of differing



racial types, much of whose speech and music has not yet been completely studied. The Phonogram Archives approached the military authorities with the request that they might be allowed to make records among the Russians in the military prison camps; and it must be said to the credit of the old régime that the authorities helped the undertaking in every way. A large collection was secured by this means, including many widely different languages, and both the speech and music of Tartars and Caucasians. In this work the Archives relied mainly upon the valuable help of Rudolf Pösch, and they owe the systematic assembling of the musical material thus acquired to Professor Robert Lach, of the Vienna University.

Lach's records and observations deal to a large extent with data almost entirely unexplored, and he has come to some highly interesting conclusions during these investigations into the music of "semi-cultured" peoples. He found that the Tartars and Caucasians among whom he worked are simply not capable of singing the same song twice in the same way, or even in approximately the same way. The Tartar singer, each time he repeats a phrase, sings one or more notes differently. He is quite unaware of these deviations, and thinks that he repeats the same melody each time. Certain other points also, which are essential to our European notion of music, do not count at all for these people, whose musical sense seems to be quite other than ours. From these examples alone, it can be seen how valuable it is to have an extensive collection of such musical records both for present and future study.

A word may be said here as to the way in which musical research is carried on by the Archives. The student of some musical problem may sometimes need to hear some hundreds of melodies in order to base his work on firm ground, but of course if he had every one he hears phonographed and the records all made permanent the process would be very expensive, and there would also be the risk of the Archives' time and money being spent uneconomically on some field of highly specialised interest, to the neglect of others equally important. Professor Lach's method is to note down the melodies he hears while he is listening to them, and then, after studying his notes, to select a number of characteristic ones to hear a second time. After hearing these again, he selects a certain number for phonographic reproduction. But of the resultant phonograms, only a certain proportion are put through the final process of being made into permanent records to be incorporated in the Archives. The rest, however, can be used for study until they wear out. A record in its first state can be put on the machine twenty or thirty times before it begins to show signs of wear. When it is done with, the wax surface of the disc can be "ironed out" in a few minutes and used again for the making of a fresh record; so at no cost to the

Archives, the researcher can have a song sung once, and then hear it over again as often as his work requires. The same applies, of course, to work in linguistics.

In one of the Austrian prison camps an interesting experiment in the recording of singing was carried out. Difficult enough it was to analyse even the simplest solo song from the Caucasus, but the difficulties seemed almost insurmountable when the song was one in which three voices took part; one could listen to every part of every record fifty times without being able to distinguish the unfamiliar sounds of the separate voices from each other. Then the idea was hit upon of phonographing a trio in such a way that each of the three singers stood beside a separate apparatus; the three phonographs were set going at once, and each singer sang into his own machine. To facilitate the synthesis, a fourth record was then made by getting the singers to sing the song a second time, this time into the one machine.

In the prison camps other series of records which had been begun before the war were also proceeded with, as for instance those of Italian dialects, and of the isolated German dialects surviving in North Italy. The prisoners were always only too pleased to put themselves at the service of the experimenters; it made a break for the poor fellows in the monotony of camp life, and gave a welcome opportunity for the assertion of personal individuality once more.

The third main group of the Archives records is that containing the voices of famous persons. It has already historic value, in spite of its comparative youth. Some of the voices may be heard foretelling out of the past events which have already come true, or uttering warnings for the future. Some of the speakers, notably actors, can already be distinguished by their speech as belonging to a past generation, though the oldest of the records does not go back more than 24 years—so quickly do the fashions of speech change. The historian of the future will doubtless listen with even more interest than we do now to the voices of leaders of the former "Kurienparlament," or to the courteous phrases of the old Emperor Francis Joseph. Many writers and scientists are represented and particularly striking is it to hear the voice of a departed poet speak again from the dead.

The fourth group of records, those of special interest to the student of medicine or physics, is small, but offers good research material. As the Archives are in the same building as the Physiological Institute, specialists can record the speech of persons with abnormal vocal organs, or can make records for the purpose of comparing the speech, before and after treatment, of patients with functional disturbances of speech, or of the mentally deranged.



It is very strange to listen to oneself speaking, as recorded by the phonograph. One is amazed to find how carelessly and irregularly one speaks, and the whole tone of one's voice is unfamiliar. Nobody is accustomed to hear himself as others hear him, for the reverberations of one's own voice come to one's ear through the bones of the skull, whereas they reach the ear of another person by means of the outside air. This difference of conductors makes a difference in the sound, and everyone is astonished to hear his own voice on a "talking machine" for the first time.

The aspect of research which deals with the stress and phrasing of everyday speech is a very important one, for thoughts are not expressed by words only; words have their sense completed by the cadence and stress with which they are uttered, and intonation is a vital factor in the expression of meaning. The range and nature of differences in intonation can be exactly ascertained by mathematical measurement, carried out by the rigorously objective methods of physical science, and certain of the Archives' publications have had such mathematical researches as their basis. The sound-waves cut into the wax by the recording needle are counted

and measured, and statistical results obtained. The waves, which are not as a rule clearly perceptible to the naked eye, can be reproduced from the record on to blackened paper by an ingenious apparatus which enlarges the ordinates 1300 times. The characteristic wave-forms of given sounds can thus be studied and compared.

It is clear from the above account that almost all the sciences of to-day have something to look for from the development of such institutions as the Phonogram Archives. At present the departments of knowledge which have been most helped are philology and the comparative study of music; but others which the Archives can serve with ever increasing usefulness, as we have seen, are physics, physiology, linguistics, psychology, æsthetics, and pedagogical theory. Workers of to-day in all these fields have had light thrown on various of their problems by the help of the Phonogram Archives. But what inexhaustible material will the students of the future have at their disposal when the Archives lie before them enriched and extended by the careful labour, not of one generation only, but of many generations to come!

HANS POLLAK.



### British Archives

Perhaps some of our readers can answer the obvious question which arises from Dr. Hans Pollak's article—Have we anything of the sort in England? One would suppose that somewhere something was being done to preserve and classify, for instance the various dialects of the counties; but if the good work is being done it is not well known to the general public. It is, of course, known that the Gramophone Company has deposited certain matrices in the British Museum; but they are not part of the ordinary public exhibits, and there is no reason why they should be. It may be of interest however to give a list of them, with the dates when they were received.

December, 1906.—MELBA: *Lo, here the gentle lark, Jewel Song from Faust, Mi chiamano Mimi.* PATTI: *Home, sweet home, Comin' thro' the rye, Voi che sapete.* CARUSO: *Vesti la giubba, Il Sogno from Manon, Celeste Aida.* TAMAGNO: *Morte d'Otello, Esultate, Ora e per sempre.* CARDINAL BOURNE: A prayer. LORD AVEBURY: A speech to the boys.

January, 1908.—LORD KELVIN: Record of his voice, May, 1907. LORD ROBERTS: Two records of his voice, June, 1907.

January, 1909.—SIR GEORGE WHITE:—Record of his voice.

July, 1909.—ARCHBISHOP DAVIDSON: Record of his voice, March, 1907. SIR H. BEERBOHM TREE: *Hamlet's Soliloquy on Death, Soliloquy on the Death of Kings, Falstaff's Speech on Honour, Anthony's Lament.*

January, 1911.—MELBA: *Elsa's Dream, Vissi d'Arte.* TETRAZZINI: *Quando rapita, Polonaise from Mignon.* CHALIAPINE: *Song of the Flea.*

There follows a long gap till 1921, when thirteen matrices were deposited, recording the voices of Lewis Waller reciting (in 1911) the Charge of the Light Brigade, Tolstoi (1905), Venizelos, Winston Churchill, Sir Ernest Shackleton, Lord Long, James Montgomery Beck, G. H. Roberts, David Lloyd George, J. R. Clynes, Lord Oxford and Asquith, Robert E. Peary, and the Ceremony of the Burial of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey.

More recently have been added the royal records of the King, the Queen, and the Prince of Wales, as well as the address by the Right Hon. W. F. Massey on the British Empire.

So far so good, and acknowledgment of gratitude should be made to the Gramophone Company for having the wisdom and public spirit to give these records to posterity. But is it conceivable that this represents the sole collection of memorable records in a public and permanent institution in this country?

# An Imperial and Permanent Opera House

By ISIDORE DE LARA

**F**EW people realise the important part the gramophone is taking to-day in the musical education of the humbler classes in Great Britain.

The Italians and the Germans, who are supposed to be the most musical people in the world, have been hearing opera at cheap prices for over 200 years. They have opera houses in every city, large and small. Since 1637, when the first theatre devoted entirely to opera was built in Italy (Venice) and in Germany (Munich, 1651), men and women of all classes have had every opportunity of developing an understanding, and a love for opera.

The gramophone and broadcasting replace in England the part played by the cheap theatres on the Continent. They have appeared, late indeed, but oh, so welcome, as the apostles and propagandists of dramatic music in England.

When the records of the gramophone and the transmissions of the broadcasting give us the absolute reproduction of the *timbre*, and of the "expression" of the voice, and through a perfect ensemble enable us to enjoy all the exquisite and infinite details of the orchestral "palette," it is possible that "concerts" will lose many patrons and ultimately become unnecessary and obsolete.

But, as regards opera, the opposite will prove the case: the more people hear fragments of a beautiful opera, the more they will crave to hear the whole work, enhanced by the force of the acting, the scenery, the dresses, and the lighting.

I have had lately very remarkable evidence of the growing taste for opera in England since I commenced an active campaign for an "Imperial and Permanent Opera House" in London.

Last December, Father Green of Saint Bartholomew's, Battersea, reading a report of a meeting where I had spoken on behalf of my scheme, wrote a letter to the *Daily Telegraph*.

He said that in Battersea where his parishioners are sadly lacking in £ : s. : d. he had formed an Opera Club, and every Sunday after Evensong the members go through the songs and story of some opera—generally, the one being performed on the Saturday at the "Old Vic," which the club regularly visits. "We commenced," Father Green writes, "with *Carmen*, but we have become highbrows now, knowing the *Ring* almost by heart. It is very cheering," he added, "to hear a Battersea workman going down the street, whistling the *Spring Song* from the *Walküre*."

I visited this club last week, and addressed the members, telling them all about my scheme, its

ambition to give the best operatic performances, at cheap prices, so that all classes could enjoy the great operas of the world. I asked for sympathy and practical help. I told them that I wished the "people" themselves to build and subsidise this Imperial Opera House, and that they should be able proudly to say that they were the founders of this great institution; independent of the millionaires and the ever-changing Governments.

I explained that the unimaginative objectors told me that the less endowed classes were incapable of understanding works of art and that they only cared for football. Why they should not like both is a mystery to me.

I concluded by appealing to them to give me a tangible proof that my vision was a correct one; and out of the twenty-four members present, eighteen subscribed £1! They there and then formed themselves into a committee to organise a big meeting for my scheme at the Battersea Town Hall. Their keen interest is most inspiring, and proves that my incredulous critics are short-sighted, and do not understand the spirit of our day.

I have also been invited by the "Parents and Teachers Guild" to address a meeting they are organising, the secretary writing to invite me, says, "The Guild consists of parents and teachers who are out to get all the good things possible for the children; they want them to have opportunities they themselves never had."

I appeal most earnestly for support, to all those who are interested in dramatic music, and who are anxious to prove to the world that England can to-day hold her own in opera.

Will not the readers of THE GRAMOPHONE each send £1, and become founders of the "Imperial Opera House"?

The name of every founder will be inscribed on the building. The London Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE has suggested to me that if the readers make the response that he anticipates to my appeal I should promise to give a permanent stall in the Opera House to THE GRAMOPHONE, to be balloted among the subscribers, if our object is achieved. I am glad to accept the suggestion. I will go further. If the readers of THE GRAMOPHONE raise the sum of £4,000 for the "Imperial Opera House," I promise that I will have a box in it devoted in perpetuity to THE GRAMOPHONE, to signify my appreciation of the collective effort. As to the balloting for seats in that box for each performance, I shall, of course, leave that delicate task to the Editor!

ISIDORE DE LARA.



# GRAMOPHONE CELEBRITIES

## IX.—Sir Landon Ronald

By TERENCE E. GOODBODY

THE late Mr. Barry Owen was a lucky man when in 1901 he secured the services of Sir Landon Ronald for the Gramophone Company. The headquarters of the Company were then in the City Road, and were very different from the Hayes factory and present magnificent Oxford Street shop. Since this time Sir Landon has held the position of Musical Adviser to the Company, and it was through him in the early days that Ben Davies, Calvé, and, later on, Melba and Patti first made their records.

Sir Landon Ronald was born in 1873. He was considered exceptionally musical at quite an early age; received all his first lessons in theory and pianoforte from his mother, and also played the violin. He tells us that he was an extremely lazy child and hated practising either instrument. When he was fourteen he had an earnest desire to become a conductor and wrote to his mother about it. His wish, as might be expected at this age, was not satisfied. He was then placed under three teachers:—Lady Thompson, for composition, Franklyn Taylor, for pianoforte, and Henry Holmes, for violin. Later he was sent to the Royal College of Music. At the age of sixteen and a half he left this institution and was considered a fair violinist, a very good pianist, and a composer of various popular songs. He had also gained a thorough knowledge of the orchestra, having played first violin in the College organisation for a considerable period.

He obtained his first public engagement shortly after this: that of pianist in Wormser's *L'enfant Prodigue*, a musical play without words. His salary was £10 per week, which was extraordinarily good for a boy of not yet seventeen. This was practically his one and only appearance before the public as solo pianist. He had again set his heart upon becoming a conductor, and he eventually succeeded in obtaining an engagement to conduct comic opera on tour. This does not sound a very important position, but Sir Landon urges all young budding conductors to take a course of theatre conducting. It is here that the art of accompanying with an orchestra is learnt; no one is more difficult to accompany than the comic opera vocalist; and having obtained a thorough knowledge of this important branch of a conductor's work,

one is well fortified for any emergency which may suddenly crop up later on at an orchestral concert.

In 1891, through the influence of his father and Signor Mancinelli, Sir Landon was appointed to the duties of coach and répétiteur at Covent Garden Theatre by Sir Augustus Harris. The next few years, although they meant really hard work and very little thanks, he considers were the most interesting and valuable of his life. He later went on tour with Harris, for whom he has a great admiration. Certainly things were done at Covent Garden in really fine style in those days, and apparently regardless of all expense. Here is a unique cast for *Carmen*; Jean de Reszke as *Don José*, Calvé as *Carmen*, Melba as *Micaela*, and Ancona as *Escamillo*.

Sir Landon Ronald's association with Melba came about entirely through his own perseverance and hard work. It happened thus: during the Covent Garden Season of 1893, Melba having required a coach for Massenet's *Manon*, which she was reviving after a considerable period, Mr. Arthur Collins asked Ronald whether he could fill the post and attend at Melba's hotel the following morning. Unfortunately he did not know a note of the work, but promised to be note perfect at the hour appointed. He left the theatre at 11.30 p.m. with the score under his arm, and sat up all night studying the opera. He presented himself in the morning, and so perfect was his execution that before noon had arrived he had been appointed Melba's solo accompanist, a position he held for the next fourteen years.

From this point Sir Landon has climbed the ladder of fame. He had plenty of opportunities for conducting opera when on tour with Melba, and we gradually see him blossoming out into the position in which we now know him best. He appeared before Queen Victoria in 1897 and 1898. His orchestral work commenced in earnest about 1908. The New Symphony Orchestra required a conductor and he was appointed. This combination is now the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, having changed its name during the war. Sir Landon has also often conducted at Birmingham, and has given a series of symphony concerts at Blackpool. In 1919 he was appointed conductor of the Scottish Orchestra. Unfortunately, apart from the records, we now hear very little of him in

conjunction with the R.A.H.O. He ran a promenade season in 1923 on Saturday nights, but this has not been continued.

Concerning music in England, Sir Landon considers that we have great talent, an enormous quantity of great promise, and one genius. It is easy to guess who that genius is, and I consider that the gramophone is shortly going to bring him to the position at the top of English music which is undoubtedly his; the next year or two will tell. To use Sir Landon's words, "I have metaphorically shouted through a megaphone to the public that Elgar's *Second Symphony* is the greatest symphonic work we have had since the Brahms No. 1, and yet they won't believe me!" I think we gramophone lovers have created the demand and we now only await the results.

In 1910 Sir Landon Ronald was appointed Principal of the Guildhall School of Music, and was knighted in 1922. He is a composer of considerable note, having written over two hundred songs and various orchestral pieces. He has also a great sense of humour which has seen him through many awkward situations and boring meetings. His book of *Variations*\* contains some delightful stories, and with the kind consent of the author and publishers, I hasten to reprint the following in Sir Landon's own words: "It was on one occasion at Birmingham that owing to a curious lapse of memory I was called upon to apologise to the audience. It was at the beginning of the second part of the concert, and I had fixed in my mind that the first item was the *Suite de ballet Sylvia*, by Delibes. Just for the sake of those who may not be familiar with this work I may mention that it begins fortissimo and therefore requires a very energetic beat on the part of the conductor. As a matter of fact the actual item on the programme was the Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which opens pianissimo on two flutes only. I took up my baton, and with a mighty effort, or as a famous music hall comedian would have described it, 'with one mighty swipe,' began to conduct (in my own mind) *Sylvia*. The effect on myself and the audience is not to be described, as the big gesture from me, and the tiny little sound from the orchestra were so incongruous. I looked at the orchestra hopelessly and wondered what on earth had occurred, or whether a joke was being played on me. My leader quickly whispered, 'It's the *Midsummer Night's Dream Overture*,' upon which I laughed, and turned to the audience and explained to them the mistake I had made."

The other story is concerning Sir Herbert Tree, who knew very little about music. Most of us have been spending the last few months playing the *Ninth Symphony*; incessantly having to get

up and wind the machine, and turn the endless discs over. Sir Herbert was producing a play about Beethoven at His Majesty's and speaking to Sir Landon Ronald before the production said:—"Ronald, as Beethoven dies and the curtain falls, I want the orchestra to play the *Ninth Symphony*!" It was explained that the symphony would last for an hour and a quarter, and that a special chorus would have to be engaged, whereupon Tree said that he had forgotten that—but it was obvious he never knew.

I have not been able to find out when the New Symphony Orchestra (now R.A.H.O.) first commenced recording: I have a 1913 edition of the H.M.V. Catalogue and there is quite a number of recordings in it. I should imagine the first records were made about 1910. The scarcity of orchestral records ten years ago was quite acute. I remember an instance during the war when the *Casse Noisette Suite* was issued on six single-sided records, 6s. 6d. each, at the rate of one disc per month. If these conditions had not changed we should still have a very diminished orchestral repertoire.

With regard to Sir Landon's conducting, some people find fault with it but personally I am a great admirer. I always think he gives a very true interpretation of a work; his readings never suffer from lack of vitality, and I have never felt a work last too long in his hands. He does not gesticulate on the platform, but generally gets all his effects by using a firm and decisive beat. To my mind he is least successful with Beethoven's works; his reading of the *Fifth Symphony* is a very long way behind that of Nikisch. Regarding the two recordings of this work, there is really very little to choose between them; it is amazing when one considers that the first was made ten years before the second. Sir Landon's reading of *Egmont* is also poor compared with Nikisch's. I think all lovers of Beethoven should possess the Nikisch record of this overture (H.M.V. No. 2 list D814). As a piece of conducting it is an absolute classic, and the recording is quite good. I think after hearing it everyone will consider Sir Landon's effort quite unworthy of him. My own special favourite recording from a very long list is Brahms' *Second Symphony*, in which the conductor is at his very best.

Now a few words as to recording. The records seem to me to portray the R.A.H.O. as if it was actually playing in the Albert Hall itself; they give me the impression that I am listening to the orchestra playing a great way off although as to actual volume they are as loud as any. I think most readers will agree with me, especially those who have attended any concerts in the Albert Hall. At the Queen's Hall the impression is absolutely opposite; I always get the impression there that the orchestra is on the top of me, and the Columbia

\*Hodder and Stoughton.



records give me that idea as well. As to actual volume, I suppose the H.M.V. are really the louder of the two. Some of the recordings of the R.A.H.O. are superb, while most of them are all good and above the average. Undoubtedly their very best record is the *Götterdämmerung* Funeral March, and next to this the first movement of the *New World Symphony* and the *Entrance of the Gods*. What actually was the cause of these brilliant recordings I don't know, but certainly H.M.V. have never reached that extraordinary high standard since. H.M.V. are simply streets ahead of Columbia in the recording of the brass and tympani, but they seem to lack that delightful singing string tone which make the records of the latter so enjoyable. Sir Landon's version of *L'après midi* is in my opinion much ahead of the Vocalion version. It always sounds to me a perfect example of orchestral balance. In the Vocalion record the volume of the harp is absolutely out of all proportion to what one would hear in a concert performance. In fact each instrument appears to come forward and give its short solo, and then slink away again to make room for the next. I suppose it was on account of its completeness that Mr. Scholes chose it for his analytical article, the H.M.V. version being slightly cut. Curiously enough the second movement of the *Unfinished Symphony* (old issue D165) has been re-recorded although we had a new complete version in December.

I am proud to be able to give a complete list of re-recordings to date through the kindness of the Gramophone Company. All of them are excellent, and I would like to draw our readers' notice to the following:—The *New World Symphony* has been redone entirely, with the exception of the first movement and the second part of the second movement, also the third and fourth movements of *Scheherazade*, and the *Funeral March of a Marionette*, the tympani in the latter are very natural. All re-recordings are marked with an asterisk, and the records are in any order in their grades. On account of space I am only dealing with grades one to three.

#### GRADE 1.

- L'Apprenti Sorcier.*
- \**L'Après-midi d'un Faune.*
- \**Spring Song and Bees' Wedding.*
- Carnival of Paris.*
- \**Casse-Noisette, March and Arabian Dance.*
- \**Casse-Noisette, Valse des Fleurs.*
- Entry of the Gods.*
- \**Funeral March of a Marionette.*
- \**March Militaire.*
- \**Midsummer Night's Dream, Scherzo.*
- \**Scheherazade* (Parts 3 and 4 re-recorded).
- \**Shepherd Fennel's Dance.*
- Shepherd's Hey.*

- Götterdämmerung Funeral March.*
- Symphony in B Minor* (Pathetic).
- Symphony in D* (Brahms).
- \**Symphony in E Minor* (New World).
- Unfinished Symphony.*
- \**Unfinished Symphony 2nd Mov. (D165).*
- Flying Dutchman Overture.*

#### GRADE 2.

- Casse-Noisette—Overture* (and Reverse Side).
- Casse-Noisette—Danse des Mirlitons.*
- \**Cavalleria—Intermezzo.*
- Coppelia—Mazurka.*
- Egmont Overture.*
- Garden of Allah Suite.*
- Gopak.*
- March Hongroise.*
- March Militaire Francaise.*
- Merry Wives of Windsor Overture.*
- Midsummer Night's Dream Nocturne.*
- Sylvia Prelude des Chasseresses.*
- Symphony No. 5 in C Minor* (Beethoven).
- \**Tannhäuser Overture.*
- Tristan—Prelude Act III and Liebestod.*
- \**Wedding March.*
- \**William Tell Overture.*
- (First Three Parts Re-Recorded).
- Song of the Volga Boatmen.*
- Coriolan Overture.*

#### GRADE 3.

- Capriccio Italien.*
- Dance Macabre.*
- Meistersinger Overture.*
- Midsummer Night's Dream Overture.*
- Mors et Vita Judex.*
- Rouet D'Omphale.*
- Tristan—Prelude Act 1.*
- Zampa Overture.*

T. E. GOODBODY.

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## EARLY CHURCH MUSIC

IT has been conjectured that the great Jewish *Hallel* was sung at the Last Supper; this consecration of an ancient chant to Christian worship may well be taken as marking the birth of our modern art of music. Music has ever been associated with ritual in some form or another, and with the founding of the Christian Church it was, naturally, as necessary as ever for worship. Apart from the chants referred to above, the "new" music took the form of a mere intensification of speech, plain-song, delivered by the priest. If you recite the *Pater Noster* to yourself and then play over the responses preceding Palestrina's *Agnus Dei* on D.338 (H.M.V.) you will find that the rise and fall of the voice intoning is what one might naturally expect. The rhythm, accent, and movement of the text determined the form of the music; the emphasis being literary rather than musical at this period.

"The element of floridity was the agent of musical freedom," Mr. Henderson says in his "Early History of Singing." When the chant gave more than one note to a syllable it found new paths of expression. The old musicians, though far from creating, as composers were to do later on, must have perceived the possibilities of moulding the chant in this way; but they travelled very gradually towards a conscious art form. The practice of *antiphonia*, in which first men, then women and children, sang a verse of a psalm followed by a response, more or less florid, such as *Alleluia* or *Kyrie*, in which all joined, was an important contribution to the development of the florid chant. To quote Mr. Henderson again, this corporate singing "indicated a tendency to move towards a purely musical expression of emotion."

The foundation of the Schola Cantorum by Pope Gregory in 590 standardised liturgical use of what we know as Gregorian chant. Here was the seed destined to fructify so marvellously during the next 900 years. Unfortunately the high beauties of the *Antiphonale* and *Graduale* are little appreciated to-day by those whose heritage they are. Instead, these people worship false gods—Gounod and his succulent compeers! The music has, however, been preserved in all its purity and seems again to be coming into its own.

The matter has been well put in a *Times* leader:

In early times—say about the year 1600—if we had attended a cathedral service and afterwards had listened to the naïve dance music of a village green, we should have been struck by two essential differences—differences so great that the two kinds of music would have seemed to have little or nothing in common. While the secular music was struggling unerringly, though unconsciously, towards the melodic and

harmonic resources of the modern major scale, the Church music was, with almost unruffled calm, using a set of keys or modes which vetoed development in that direction. Further, while the necessities of dancing were helping secular music to evolve systems of rhythm as fixed as the metrical systems of poetry, the only rhythmical consideration in Church music was the natural fall of the accent in the unmetrical sentences of prose to which the music was sung. As to the question of scale it may be true that in time the more austere modes of the Church lost the sympathy of those impregnated with the major scale of daily life; though it is a little difficult to see why, if this is the case, men have always been able to use conversational English for daily life without losing sense of the greater beauty of the more austere English of the Bible. However that may be, there are quite certainly in modern composition signs that composers now realise the rich opportunities presented to them by these very Church modes which for so long lay discarded and unworked.

The history of the development of plain chant lies outside the scope of this article; but in passing, let us gratefully remember those obscure monks who laboured at the formation of the church modes, at notation, at everything connected with the art of music, trying to put this on a scientific and logical basis.

We must now consider what records are available for those who wish to study and enjoy plain chant in their homes. There are only a few and those, unfortunately, the early recordings contained in the H.M.V. catalogue No. 2. They may be grouped as follows:—

*Alleluia* from the *Mass of the Assumption* and *Alleluia, Pascha Nostrum* (E.337).

*Alleluia* from the *Mass, Fac nos innocuam* and *Introit* from the *Mass of the Assumption* (D.381).  
*Introit* of Easter and *Introit* of the *Mass, Sacerdotes Dei* (D.832).

First response from the first *Nocturne* of the *Office of Christmas* (D.833).

The other records contain, with the exception, of course, of the music of Palestrina, Viadana, and Gabrielli, appalling travesties of church music. It is marvellous that the composers escaped excommunication! The records should be played with a fibre or at most a half-tone needle.

The beauty of the music lies in its pure outline and its perfect appropriateness, so that to have the words before one is a great help, indeed almost a necessity. They may be found in any Roman Missal.

The glory of the polyphonic school of church music, which originated with the invention of counterpoint (the placing of vocal parts first of dependent then, as it grew, of independent interest, above the *Cantus firmus* or fixed chant), was



Palestrina. His music "is perfect with a perfection almost unearthly." To hear his works adequately sung in a great cathedral is an unforgettable experience of the highest spiritual and artistic value. In addition, such an experience serves to remind one of the fire of religious fervour, the whole-hearted service of the great musicians, artists and architects of the sixteenth century. The age that witnessed their wonderful achievements has indeed passed away, but we may draw constant inspiration from the ever-living beauty of their works. By far the best recordings of Palestrina are those issued by the Parlophone Company. These will be found in the list below together with the older H.M.V. recordings, of which the settings of the Mass are the most noteworthy.

The works of other composers are given with dates to show their relation to their great contemporary. The Parlophone recordings are again of great excellence. Our own William Byrd has been called the English Palestrina, a title he may worthily claim. The fine records of his *Kyrie* and *Sanctus*—the one achieving in three short phrases deep devotion, the other a miracle of climax considering the small forces used—and the beautiful *Agnus Dei*, should be in every music lover's collection. These records are in some ways the most successful, as only one voice is used for each part, with a distinct gain in the matter of clearness and balance. The motet *Ave Verum* is also an exquisite piece of singing. Byrd's music is published by Stainer and

Bell; Palestrina's and the other composers' can be obtained from Chester and Co.

#### PALESTRINA (1525–1594).

Motet, *Exsultate Deo* and Offertory, *Laudate Dominum* (Parlo. R.20001).

Responses and Preface with *Sanctus* from *Mass, Aeterna Christi* and Responses and *Agnus Dei* from the same (H.M.V. D.338).

*Kyrie* and *Gloria* from the same (H.M.V. D.336; this has Gounod's *Nazareth* on the reverse).

Two Motets: *Ave Maria* and *Sicut Cervus* (H.M.V. D.826).

Motet: *La Cruda Mia Nemica* (H.M.V. E.336).

#### OTHER COMPOSERS.

*Exsultate Justi*, Viadana (1565?–1644?) (H.M.V. E.336).

*Te Deum*—Anerio (1567–1620) (H.M.V. D.340).

*Filiae Jerusalem*, Gabrielli (1510–1586) (H.M.V. D.833).

Two Motets: *Innocentes*, Marenzio (1550–1599) and *Ave Maria*, Vittoria (1545–1611) (Parlo. R.20000).

*Kyrie Eleison* and *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*, Byrd (1538–1623) (H.M.V. E.290).

Motet: *Ave Verum*, Byrd (1538–1623), (H.M.V. E.305).

Motet: *Exsurge Domine*, Byrd (1538–1623) (H.M.V. D.710); these have motets in English on the reverse.

N. P.



### Early Church Music

In connection with the article on "Early Church Music," the following communication from the Gramophone Co., Ltd., is of peculiar interest:—

"The Church of England Service has been recorded by His Master's Voice in co-operation with Dr. E. H. Fellowes and a choir from Saint George's Chapel, Windsor. The series of four large double-sided records includes settings by Thomas Weelkes, James Nares, Garrett, James Turle, Jonathan Battishill, S. S. Wesley and Henry Purcell, the famous Westminster Abbey organist. It covers the Morning Service and the Evening Canticles, and it is intended both for the use of people who are remote from Church services and as a model for village and other church choirs without a musical foundation."

### Easter Holidays.

The London Office—which by the way now has an elegant sign above the door at 58, Frith Street, and a newly enlarged letter-box!—will be closed from 5 p.m. on Thursday, the 9th, to 9 a.m. on Tuesday, the 14th.

### The Wilson Protractor

The importance of needle track alignment is evidently beginning to permeate the households where there is no technical enthusiast. From the first we have had all these enthusiasts behind us; but now the rank and file of ordinary gramophone-users, to whom mechanical details of construction are merely a bore, are realising that it is sheer folly to go on using a gramophone which is quite unnecessarily damaging records. With the aid of the "Wilson Protractor" which was in the last number anyone can see at a glance to what extent his own machine falls short of a reasonable standard—and this standard, let us say with as much latitude as possible, should be a maximum of 8° of error at any point in a twelve-inch record. It is perfectly possible to align a sound-box so that the tracking error does not exceed 2°; but this is perhaps too high a standard to demand of the manufacturers.

In response to requests, we have had some Wilson Protractors made up on cardboard; and these will be sent to any reader who forwards 6d., post free. It is a thing which everyone should possess.

# AMERICAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS

By JOHN F. PORTE

MR. ERNEST NEWMAN has stated his conviction that the best symphony orchestras in America are superior in their playing to any in England. I tremble to contradict anything that is said by this most redoubtable and uncompromising of English musical critics, and would far sooner leave such a daring adventure to a brave woman. Miss Ursula Greville, the singer, and editor of *The Sackbut*, once wrote in the *Musical News and Herald* a refusal to accept Mr. Newman's dictums as if he were God. This example is stirring enough to follow.

It is a peculiar fact that almost every foreign musical visitor to America is not there long before he begins to praise American musical efforts. This is sometimes done because of conviction, sometimes as fact, and often for reasons of policy. I think Richard Strauss was the only man who admitted intentions that are held by the great majority of foreign musical visitors to America. He said he had come there to make money, and was making it. Now we cannot possibly think of Mr. Newman's remarks in America as being anything but the results of convictions founded on his penetrative critical judgment. He has already pulled some New York musical productions to pieces. His remarks on the high standard of efficiency shown by first-rate American symphony orchestras are, I may perhaps testify by my own experience, substantially true; but he is equally sound in his remarking that English orchestras, with their remarkable sight-reading, occasionally touch unsurpassed artistic heights.

I have taken the opportunity offered by that increasingly musically educative factor, the gramophone, to make comparison between American and English symphony orchestras. The Gramophone Exchange, 29 and 31, New Oxford Street, W.C. 1, hold a selling stock of Victor (American H.M.V.) records specially manufactured in England by the Gramophone Company, Ltd. Included among these are some good discs of first-rate American symphony orchestras. At first hearing they might, like other foreign records, inspire the amateur to dash off a letter to his favourite gramophone journal saying they are superior to any English makes. (Not exactly critical judgment, but where should we be without his fine enthusiasm?) I have heard nearly all the foreign makes of orchestral records, but, although the playing really is sometimes finer,

I cannot say they are altogether superior to the best English H.M.V. and Columbia. The English records of Albert Coates conducting Tchaikovsky's 5th comprise the finest gramophone symphony I have heard. The interpretation is stamped with the mark of indisputable authority; the playing is a vivid mirror of the conductor's magnetic personality in its most favoured kind of music; and the recording is clear and generally excellent.

The great thing about the American symphony orchestra is that, like the American business man, it radiates an exceedingly obvious efficiency. Its precision is akin to that of a first-rate English brass band. Let us first notice some records of the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra which are obtainable in London. The conductor, Leopold Stokowski, is a masterful and brilliant musician, by birth an Englishman, but thrown into the melting-pot of American citizenship. His orchestra has the advantages of constant rehearsals, hardly any financial worries, and an assuring pension fund for its personnel. It is now one of the finest in the world.

6246. *Scheherazade* (Rimsky-Korsakov): *Festival at Bagdad*; *Young Prince and Young Princess*.

I have said that Stokowski is brilliant, and this is shown by his taking the *Festival* about twice as fast as Albert Coates does a similar, but not the same, extract from *Scheherazade* on Columbia L.1429. I prefer Coates's version because he seems to get a truer perspective of Rimsky-Korsakov, and because his technique is there solely to serve the music. Stokowski's version is so efficient that one has to listen to the orchestra more than the music.

6430. *Symphony No. 5* (Tchaikovsky) 2nd movement: Parts 1 and 2.

6431. *Symphony No. 5* (Tchaikovsky) 2nd movement: Part 3. *Snow Maiden* (Rimsky-Korsakov): *Dance of the Tumblers*.

Tchaikovsky's finest symphony movement is here very beautifully played. The control of the orchestra is splendid and the emotion powerful. I prefer the authoritative rendering by Albert Coates, however, and as his command of the orchestra is as good and his emotion even more vivid in this particular work, I place his records above those of Stokowski. In the Rimsky-Korsakov extract, Coates's version on an English H.M.V. finds the Russian temperament in the music with



a first-hand knowledge that leaves Stokowski far behind.

6244. *Tannhäuser Overture* (Wagner): Parts 1 and 2.

74768. *Tannhäuser Overture* (Wagner): Part 3. Single-side.

This is easily the finest gramophone version of the *Tannhäuser Overture*. Stokowski fairly makes it glow where others get no more than a smoulder in comparison.

6241. *Rapsodie España* (Chabrier). *Samson and Delilah* (Saint-Saëns). *Bacchanale*.

These pieces are suitable for brilliant treatment and make a very good pair.

6366. *Khovantchina* (Moussorgsky): *Entr'acte*. *Finlandia* (Sibelius).

6240. *Salome* (R. Strauss) *Salome's Dance*: Two Parts.

Stokowski gives a better piece of Moussorgsky's little known opera than does Hamilton Harty on Columbia. *Finlandia* is, of course, much cut. *Salome's Dance* is given a vivid performance, but Coates's close association with opera gives his H.M.V. record a more authoritative aspect.

6242. *Symphony No. 3* (Brahms): *Allegretto movement*. *Symphonie Pathétique* (Tchaikovsky): *March-Scherzo*.

Stokowski plays the Brahms movement very cleanly and well, the finely balanced playing giving a charmingly romantic view of the avowed classicist. The Tchaikovsky cutting is a sharp indication of superiority when compared with the English records of Sir Landon Ronald and Sir Henry J. Wood. The latter's emotionalism approaches that of Stokowski, but his orchestra is inferior. English H.M.V. recording is better and uncut.

6245. *The Valkyries* (Wagner): *Ride of the Valkyries*; *Wotan's Farewell* and *Magic Fire Music*.

These are played with finely glowing feeling, but they have not the bigness nor the insight of Coates's H.M.V. records of the "Ring."

Stokowski and the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra present a formidable challenge to English symphony orchestras. I know of only two conductors in England who need not bow to Stokowski, and they are Albert Coates and Sir Thomas Beecham. The American has the great advantage of a permanent orchestra, that, owing to the pride of the citizens of Philadelphia, is not likely to know financial worries to any extent. Before leaving the Philadelphia Orchestra's records, I would call attention to three magnificent discs that I could not find at the Gramophone Exchange, but which I was enabled to hear some time ago by courtesy of the Recording Department of the Gramophone Company.

*Concerto No. 2, in C minor* (Rachmaninoff), played by the composer with Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

8064. *Adagio sostenuto* (2nd movement): Parts 1 and 2.

8065. *Adagio sostenuto*: Part 3. *Allegro scherzando* (3rd movement—*Finale*): Part 1.

8066. *Allegro scherzando*: Parts 2 and 3.

These historic records, issued in June, 1924, are equal from every point of view to any pianoforte concertos yet issued. The lyric beauty of the second movement and the surge and sweep of the third are most stirringly rendered by the fine orchestra, while Rachmaninoff's playing comes through with all that power and poetry that we associate with it at his recitals. The balance is excellent and I could find hardly any faulty parts in the recording. The English H.M.V. have the materials for pressing copies, but hesitate to include them in their catalogue because the first movement is not available. Perhaps if sufficient people write asking for these records to be made the company will comply with the demand; otherwise they must be ordered through any H.M.V. dealer and cost, like the other Victor Red Seal records mentioned in this article, 9s. 6d. each. They are worth it.

The famous Boston Symphony Orchestra have a good recording which I heard at the Gramophone Exchange.

6050. *Symphony No. 4* (Tchaikovsky): *Finale*, Parts 1 and 2.

The name of the conductor is not given, but it may be remembered that Carl Muck's musicianship was forgotten and he was dismissed when he refused to subject the orchestra to the "Star-Spangled Banner." He was succeeded by the Frenchman, Pierre Monteux.

The New York Philharmonic Orchestra has a history associated with practically every distinguished musician who has visited America. Wagner, Mendelssohn, Liszt, Rubinstein, and Dvorák were honorary members. Its first concert was given in 1842, but its history is, of course, not so venerable and distinguished as that of the Philharmonic Society in England. The records we shall notice were made by the great Dutch conductor, Willem Mengelberg.

6223. *Coriolan Overture* (Beethoven): Parts 1 and 2.

This at once displays Mengelberg's superb power and presents Beethoven far above even the good rendering by Sir Landon Ronald. The recording is good.

6224. *Oberon Overture* (Weber): Parts 1 and 2.

Another fine example, cleanly recorded. It is taken rather fast, but not more finely played than Sir Thomas Beecham's recording for Columbia, which was removed from the catalogue because of its poor volume. The Mengelberg is also later and better recording than the old Nikisch version in the H.M.V. Historical Catalogue.

6225. *Les Préludes-Symphonic Poem* (Liszt): Parts 1 and 2; (6373) Parts 3 and 4.

These are fine records that show Liszt as a greater orchestral composer than is generally recognised. Mengelberg brings all his musicianship and technique of the baton to here make two excellent records.

Incidental to this article, I may mention that the Victor catalogue contains some of Albert Coates's

recordings with the Symphony Orchestra in England. One of these was never issued here. This is a cut version on three records of Beethoven's seventh symphony. It is a typically Coatesian performance, picturesque and vivid, but not so severely "classical" as the Weingartner version we have. The records are Victor Black Label, 55165, 55166, and 55174.

JOHN F. PORTE.



## List of Selected Vocalion Records

The following list is the combined work of four of our most trusted readers. The numbers in brackets at the end of the titles refer to the pages of THE GRAMOPHONE on which references to the records are made.

### VOCAL.

- A.0215 (5s. 6d.).—Gerhardt: *Der Nussbaum* and *Der Erlkönig* (i, 41, 50, 78, 104).  
 A.0216 (5s. 6d.).—Gerhardt: *Feldeinsamkeit* and *Ständchen* (i, 41, 60).  
 A.0220\* (5s. 6d.).—Gerhardt: *An die Musik* and *Sapphische Ode* (ii, 263, 312).  
 B.3107 (4s.).—Gerhardt: *Im Kahne* and *Der Tod und das Mädchen*.  
 B.3112 (4s.).—Gerhardt: *Der Musensohn* and *Morgen* (ii, 217, 312).  
 B.3115 (4s.).—Gerhardt: *Vergebliches Ständchen* and *Cäcilie* (ii, 312, 341).  
 A.0207 (5s. 6d.).—Rosing: *Song of the Flea* and *The Goat*.  
 A.0223 (5s. 6d.).—Rosing: *Field-Marshal Death and No, Pagliaccio, non son* (ii, 315, 341).  
 B.3114 (4s.).—Rosing: *The Clock* and *The Journey* (ii, 303).  
 A.0217 (5s. 6d.).—Tokatyan: *Salut, demeure chaste et pure* and *Ah fuyez, douce image!*  
 A.0204 (5s. 6d.).—Rimini: *Credo* and *Largo al Factotum*.  
 A.0211 (5s. 6d.).—Scotney: *Ah! fors è lui* and *Polonaise* (ii, 76).  
 A.0212 (5s. 6d.).—Scotney: *Caro nome* and *I dolce suono* (i, 41, 50; ii, 76).  
 A.0213 (5s. 6d.).—Scotney: *Je Veux Vivre* and *Blue Danube Waltz* (i, 147).  
 A.0214 (5s. 6d.).—Scotney: *Una voce* and *Theme and Variations* (i, 252; ii, 42).  
 A.0201 (5s. 6d.).—Raisa and Tokatyan: *Miserere* and *La Paloma* (i, 147).  
 B.3100 (4s.).—Raisa and Rimini: *Là ci darem* and *Brindisi (Otello)* (i, 206).  
 A.0222 (5s. 6d.).—Lazzari: *Il lacerato spirito* and *La Calunnia* (ii, 303).  
 J.04109 (4s. 6d.).—Eric Marshall: *Eri tu* and *Promesse de mon avenir* (i, 16).  
 D.02071 (4s. 6d.).—McEachern: *Le Cor* and *I am a Roamer*.

D.02145 (4s. 6d.).—Stevens: *It is enough* and *Why do the Nations* (ii, 319, 320)?

In addition to the above, the records of Kathleen Destournel, Olga Haley, George Baker, and Lenghi-Cellini should not be overlooked.

### INSTRUMENTAL AND CHAMBER MUSIC.

- X.9463 (3s.), X.9464 (3s.), and K.05117 (4s. 6d.).—Tertis and Hobday: *Sonata in F minor* (Brahms) (ii, 217, 263, 315).  
 D.02023 (4s. 6d.).—Sammons, Tertis, and Kiddle: *Sonata No. 8* (Handel).  
 D.02111 (4s. 6d.).—Sammons, Tertis, and Hobday: *Bagatellen* (Dvorák) (i, 139, 151, 169).  
 D.02150 (4s. 6d.).—Sammons, Tertis, and Hobday: *Trio No. 7* (Mozart) (i, 253; ii, 70).  
 J.04114 (4s. 6d.) and J.04115 (4s. 6d.).—London String Quartet and Hobday: *Quintet, Op. 44* (Schumann) (i, 3, 218).  
 X.9178 (3s.).—Darré: *Prelude* (Mendelssohn) and *Romance* (Schumann).  
 D.02019 (4s. 6d.).—Sammons and Tertis: *Passacaglia* and *Duet for violin and viola* (ii, 36).  
 D.02107 (4s. 6d.).—D'Arányi and Fachiri: *Concerto in D minor* (Bach) (i, 115, 151, 152; ii, 36, 200).  
 K.05110 (4s. 6d.).—D'Arányi and Fachiri: *Concerto in C minor* (Bach) and *Sonata in F minor* (Pugnani) (ii, 217, 316).  
 K.05142 (4s. 6d.).—D'Arányi and Fachiri: *Sonata in F minor* (Pugnani) and *Sonata* (Boccherini) (ii, 316, 342).  
 D.02104-6-12 (4s. 6d. each).—Tertis and Hobday: *Sonata in C minor* (Grieg) (ii, 275).

### ORCHESTRAL.

- K.05125-6-7 (4s. 6d. each).—Æolian Orchestra: *Oxford Symphony* (Haydn) (ii, 301, 313).  
 K.05105-6 and K.05112-3 (4s. 6d. each).—Æolian Orchestra: *Symphony in G minor* (Mozart) (ii, 177, 216, 313).  
 D.02126 (4s. 6d.).—Æolian Orchestra: *L'Après midi d'un Faune* (i, 8; ii, 35, 77, 156).

Note.—Schumann's Quintet needs to be played with a sound-box which is kind to strings. The piano is very strong and is apt to drown the strings.

\*Misprint on page 263 (December).



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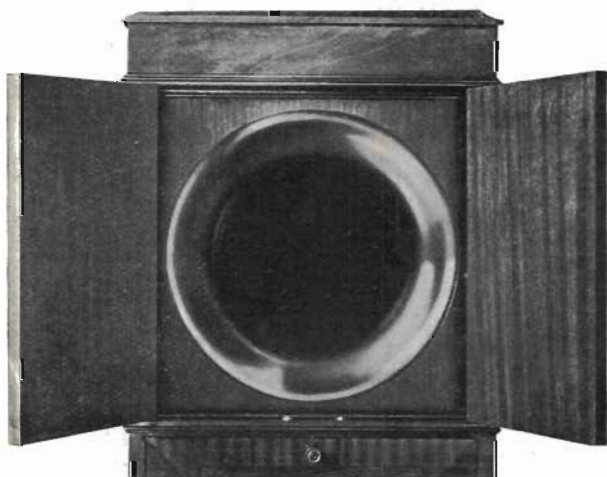
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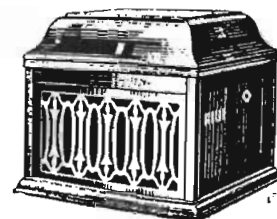
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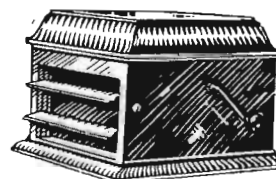
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# The Gramophone—and Film Music

By J. B. HASTINGS

THE average person will be astonished to find how much time and trouble are spent in fitting suitable music to film plays. But the big film companies have come to realise that a really good picture play can be ruined by the accompaniment of inappropriate music, and, incidentally let me whisper, they have found that even a feeble production can be made fairly tolerable by the ingenious use of the orchestra. So, with each super film, is issued a list of "musical suggestions," complete with the cues and signs necessary to fit the various selections to the screen action. In many cases the actual full music score, timed to a note, is hired out with the film. Since I have had the experience of compiling a large number of such lists—I forget whether the exact number runs into millions or merely thousands—perhaps

I may be permitted to indicate here how it is done.

The film is projected in the cinema company's private theatre and there I see the film with an assistant—and a stop watch. From the moment the first scene starts I am literally thinking in music. With a love scene I try to imagine just that type of sentimental melody that will exactly fit the picture, and move on in sympathy with it. A fight—then I endeavour to find an "agitato" of a tempo that will synchronise as near as possible with the speed and tensity of the film. Dramatic situations, storms, fires, sea scenes—all call for special treatment. As the film goes through, the "changes" are noted either by the sub-titles that precede them, or action on screen. In illustration of this I reproduce here a fragment of a typical "musical suggestions" sheet.

SUB-TITLES OR SCENES.	NAME OF PIECE.	STYLE OF MUSIC.
7. ★This Miss Louise Maurel .. ..	<i>Chanson Napolitaine</i> (D'Ambrosio) .. ..	Flowing Melody.
8. ★Good-bye, big man of the hills ..	<i>Aubade d'Amour</i> , 7th bar (Monti) .. ..	Love theme. .
9. (John runs after train) .. ..	<i>Men of Prometheus</i> , Overture from <i>allegro</i> (Beethoven) ..	Train hurry.
10. ★Hollywood .. ..	No. 3: from <i>Miniature Suite</i> , 16th bar (Coates) ..	Bright Waltz.
11. * After sub-title. ★I've promised to dine. Fade out into restaurant scene)	* <i>Down Hollywood Way</i> —start after ad lib. bars (Parsons) ..	Fox-trot.
12. (Dance finished) .. ..	<i>Soirée</i> , 5th bar (Zamecnik) .. ..	Light intermezzo.

The first column contains the cues, column 2 the music and composer, column 3 the style of the piece. Those cues marked with a (★) are the opening words of the sub-titles. Brackets indicate action on screen. Both types of cue indicate a change in the action or tempo. No. 9, for instance, shows a quick change from a quiet appealing melody to a pulsating *allegro*. It will be easily seen that a cinema orchestral leader must be on the alert the whole time. It might almost be said that he must work with one eye on the screen and the other on his music.

Many big photoplays call for a great number of "changes"—absolutely essential if the resultant entertainment is to be perfect. One of the most difficult films I have ever had to "fit" is *Captain Blood*, which is now showing throughout the country.

Mr. Rafael Sabatini's story is so full of action

and varying moods, and has been filmed with such faithfulness that no less than seventy changes are necessary, though this does not mean seventy different selections. The chief "themes" in this story are (a) love; (b) dramatic; (c) sea battles; and (d) the "Captain Blood" theme itself. All these are there in various shades and emphasis.

As an introduction we start with the *Captain Blood* song, specially written as an overture or prologue. This is followed by *Admirals All* (Hubert Bath) and is used, in all, in eight different places. For the love theme I have chosen *The World is a Beautiful Song* (Vane), and the principal sea-fighting scenes, Beethoven's *King Stephen* overture from "presto," varying this with various "incidental symphonies" specially written for film use.

Here is an extract from the music which I have fitted to the comparatively quiet first reel of *Captain Blood* :—

SUB-TITLES OR SCENES.	NAME OF PIECE.	STYLE OF MUSIC.
Overture or prologue .. ..	<i>*Captain Blood</i> (Husons) .. ..	
PART 1.		
1. (Open at screening) .. ..	<i>Admirals All</i> (Bath) .. ..	(Blood's theme) Melody of bold character.
2. (At Proclamation) (fade out) ..	<i>Fame and Glory</i> (Matt) .. ..	Grand processional march.
3. ★And while the Rebel (knocks on door).	<i>Phaeton</i> , from <i>allegro animato</i> (Saint-Saëns) ..	Dramatic agitato.
4. (Soldiers enter room) .. ..	<i>Recitativo No. 1</i> (Rapee and Axt) .. ..	Tense melody.
5. (Man taken out of cupboard) (fade out)	<i>Phédre</i> Overture, from <i>allegro</i> (Massenet) ..	Tense dramatic agitato.
6. ★Arrested before the Bloody Assize (fade out) .. ..	Intro. from <i>Bertrand du Guesclin</i> Overture (Fauchey) ..	Very tense melody.
7. ★But it was not meant .. ..	<i>Prelude to Oriental Drama</i> , 5th bar (Baron) ..	Tense dramatic Oriental melody.
8. ★His niece, Arabella .. ..	Refrain: from <i>The World is a Beautiful Song</i> (Vane) ..	Love theme.
9. (Natives carrying man in Sedan chair.	No. 3: from <i>Perruques et Falbalas</i> (Pesse) ..	Pompous intermezzo.

Compare this with the smashing character of of Port Royal, Jamaica is introduced. Here you the music towards the end, when the terrific battle will notice indications of "effects."

SUB-TITLES OR SCENES.	NAME OF PIECE.	STYLE OF MUSIC.
PART 10.		
64. (Open) (Close up of Mary and Arabella at window) (Observe heavy gun firing and explosion) (fade out then)	<i>Furioso</i> , No. 2 (Zamecnik) .. ..	Heavy battle agitato.
65. (At close-up of flag) .. ..	No. 3: from <i>Impressions Rustiques</i> (start at 18) (Razigade)	Heroic military.
66. ★The last of the Arabella (fade out then)	<i>Capriccio Italien</i> , from 18½ bar (Tschaikowsky) ..	Strong dramatic melody.
67. ★It was a deed (fade out then) ..	<i>Admirals All</i> (Bath) .. ..	(Blood's theme) Melody of bold character.
68. (Arabella in room) .. ..	<i>Au Pays du Tendre</i> , 5th bar (Pesse) .. ..	Sentimental melody.
69. (Arabella walks away) (Change of scene) (Colonel Bishop walks away from Blood)	<i>Phoece</i> Overture (Benoit) .. ..	Tense melody of military character.
70. (Scene of Mary and Pitt) .. ..	<i>Canzonetta</i> (Godard) .. ..	Light Love intermezzo.
71. ★The Verdict .. ..	Refrain from <i>The World is a Beautiful Song</i> (Vane) ..	Love theme.

Naturally, many cinemas cannot, for various reasons, follow the "official" musical suggestions in their entirety, especially as it is only in cases of exceptional films like *Captain Blood* that the complete score, correctly numbered and marked, can be hired from the film company.

No orchestra library under the sun can hope to contain every composition that may be wanted; and no musical director knows off-hand the exact nature of every composition in existence. It is here that the gramophone is so useful. When he finds himself "stuck" for a suitable number the musical director can always turn to the gramophone for guidance as to the style and tempo of any selection, the title of which seems to indicate possibilities. Moreover, many cinema orchestral

leaders, to my knowledge, gain valuable hints from the reviews of records and music published in THE GRAMOPHONE.

In conclusion, I would say that the modern super-cinema, with its often excellent orchestra, together with the great study given to the musical side of films by cinema companies, is having a marked effect upon the musical taste of the British public.

What with this and broadcasting—both tending to familiarise the "Man in the Street" with all that is best in music—it is not surprising that the gramophone firms are experiencing what can most aptly be termed "a record boom."

J. B. HASTINGS.



# THE SONATAB

## An Amateur Job

By H. T. BARNETT, M.I.E.E.

*(The following account of a gramophone which Captain Barnett made and brought to the London Office to be inspected and photographed will interest especially those readers who want a good machine, cannot afford to buy one, and have an aptitude for simple carpentering. It was constructed by him in order to test a Jewel tone-arm and sound-box which were submitted by Messrs. Murdoch, of Oxford Street, and which could not be fitted to any of his gramophones because the opening of the tone-arm at the base was two inches in diameter. Anyone who is sufficiently interested to come to 58, Frith Street—by appointment—can scrutinise the Sonatab and judge the cost and the difficulty of making a gramophone on this model. The dimensions are :—Table top, 20" x 30"; height of shelf from floor, 3"; between horn and shelf, 4". The photograph is by the Kyrle Enlarging Co., Virginia Water.—LONDON ED.)*

THE rapidly expanding Jewel tone-arm being specially suited to a short acoustic system, all that was needed to complete the gramophonic unit was a short horn. I had no cabinet I could fit up, nor any turning piece I could use to get the horn into a horizontal axis; but I had a little oak table with a shelf at the bottom, and it occurred to me that a simple down-cast horn directing its tone on to the shelf (from which it might be reflected out and up into the room) might answer the purpose admirably. I made the horn from two pieces of  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. strawboard joined up with paper fasteners and heavily varnished inside and out.

After trying out this simple arrangement with all sorts of records, there is no doubt in my mind that the tone-arm is an excellent one for the purpose in view; a tone-arm having a more gradual expansion would need a longer acoustic system than could be got under a table of ordinary height with a shelf at the bottom of the legs. The tone of the machine is far better than that of any inexpensive gramophone I know, and it radiates and fills the whole room in quite a wonderful way.

Constructional points I need mention are few. If the horn cardboard cannot be cut to shape by measurement the best way to go to work is to make a paper pattern of the horn from a sheet of brown paper pinned together and then to open it out and make the paper pattern serve to cut the strawboard from. The top of the horn should be the same diameter internally as the base of the tone-arm. The top of the horn may be cemented and tacked to the surface of the hole through the table top.

Constructional details I cannot give, for obviously they will vary with every table and tone-arm to be fitted. Make up your mind what needles you are going to use for ordinary records before you mark out your table for boring the necessary holes. If you will be using fine steel needles exclusively, as I do, set your sound-box (screw its neck firmly) with the needle angle at  $45^\circ$  (say half past seven o'clock); if for ordinary steel needles set it at  $50^\circ$  angle (say twenty past seven), if fibre needles set it at  $60^\circ$  angle (seven o'clock). Having set the sound-box, then space the distance between the motor spindle hole and the hole at the base of the tone-arm, so that the needle comes  $\frac{3}{8}$  in. in front of the spindle centre, and this will give a good enough track-alignment for your records to wear well.

I should not advise trying to adapt this down-cast horn arrangement to a cupboard or to anything other than a table in which sound will be quite free to issue in every direction from the bottom of the horn.

Some improvements of quite an inexpensive nature can be made on the machine

as illustrated: (1) The motor may be kept covered from dust by a tin box or even a cardboard collar-box having the tops of the sides turned outwardly at right angles and held to the table by photo-frame turn-clips. (2) The shelf may be covered with a plate of glass. (3) The bottom five inches may be sawn from off a soap box, covered with nice textile material and fixed to the table with a piano hinge, so as to cover up the tone-arm and turntable in the conventional way. (4) A silk cloth may be used to cover the table without causing loss of tone. It would be necessary to pierce it with holes to go over



the motor spindle, the brake, the speed regulator, and the tone-arm. (5) Record storing cabinets might be fitted between the tops of the legs of the table at each end. (6) A draw or turn-box for needles might be fitted at the side.

The machine is not a *perfect* gramophone, but even if it were made up not as shown, but with a very cheap motor and a cheap LONG *straight pattern* tone-

arm and a cheap Pianina sound-box (be sure you get a 65 mm. sound-box) it would be ever so much better than any common machine on the market sold at many times its cost.

In the interest of the gramophone movement all over the world, foreign and Colonial papers please copy.

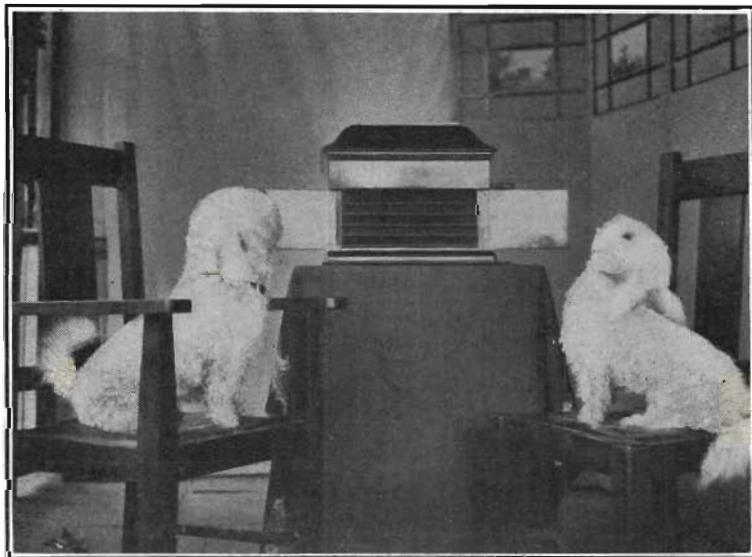
H. T. BARNETT.

### Correspondence.

Last month we asked our readers to adjudicate on the letters published since October, so that we might express our indebtedness to the writer. We asked for the three best records. The results are interesting. Almost exactly half the letters published occur in the various lists sent in; among them those of Bertram Short on the League of Nations and the Gramophone (p. 305), Frank Eaton on the New Edison (p. 397), G. Raymond on Needle-Track Alignment (p. 256, with P. Wilson's answer), Dr. Britzius on American Records Issued in 1924 (p. 352), R. L. Bigg's Selected List (p. 351), and the various letters of P. Wilson and H. F. V. Little are prominent. LIONEL GILMAN's letters on p. 172 and p. 207 secure much recognition from readers, but it is his letter, "Which Illusion?", on p. 307, which places him in the winning three together with JAMES RAINFORD's still debated "Hempel and Galli-Curci" (p. 306), and W. B. HAWORTH's "Ruddigore" (p. 255). Our thanks are due to all who have helped us to choose these correspondents for a modest reward in the form of records; and a pound's worth of records has been sent to the only reader who chose the winning three—M. Bull, of 60, Hazlewell Road, Putney.

### Mickey Again.

The photograph on this page, sent to us by Mr. T. Pask, of Johannesburg, is more than a replica of the portrait of Mickey which appeared in the October number last year, for it introduces Mrs. Mickey to us, and is a lesson to all of us in the powers of the gramophone to produce discord in married life. "Afflatus," please note!



### Syncopated Music

The Savoy Orpheans (twenty-seven performers conducted by W. Debroy Somers) with the Savoy Havana Band (eight performers under C. R. Newton) and the Boston Orchestra (five performers under H. Jacobs—the marvellous saxophonists so familiar to frequenters of the Berkeley restaurant) gave their third concert at the Queen's Hall on March 10th. It was as great a success as the others, and much credit for the brilliant organisation is due to Mr. W. de Mornys, who "presented" it.

Carroll Gibbons carried off the honours at the piano (he is the second pianist of the Orpheans), though Messrs. Gibbons and Mayerl, as before, were wonderful in their duets. The Boston Orchestra is—to express a personal opinion—the best of the three. Readers interested in such matters should pay special attention to *Alabama Bound* and *Me Neenyah*, two thrilling new dance tunes; and also to Ted Fiorito who, if

one may judge by his *Little Old Clock*, is a composer with a big future. But these were only the best things out of a rattling good programme; and there was art as well as skill in *The Old Negro Band* and the Stephen Foster scena.

### Have You Heard Them?

By the great kindness of Messrs. John Broadwood and Sons all the records issued by the National Gramophonic Society (see p. 433) may now be heard at their show rooms, 158, New Bond Street. We hope that readers will take the first opportunity of deciding for themselves whether the records are as desirable as members think, and that members will send their friends to Broadwood's. They can join the Society on the spot, sign the Banker's Order, and carry the records home.



# COMPETITION

WE want a good name for this competition—something suggesting stimulation, an increase of circulation, a spreading of good news. "Cross words are said before they are done"; but surely one of our readers can switch his—her, yes, probably her—mind from the daily puzzle and give us the correct description for what is going to be a really interesting competition?

Briefly repeated from the last number, the idea is that everyone should try to get us many new readers before next autumn. Write to 58, Frith Street, W.1, for as many Order Forms as you think you can use profitably—ten, twenty, a hundred—and when you have secured a new reader complete the particulars, sign your name on the bottom line, and send the form to us. On August 31st the results will be examined and will be announced in the October number.

The basic idea on which this competition rests is that if money is to be spent on increasing the circulation of THE GRAMOPHONE, it should be spent "in the family"; and further, that it is doing a kindness to anyone who has a gramophone to introduce him to our paper—it is not like touting for subscriptions for something which is going to benefit a third party.

At the same time, if you who read this—whether you are a subscriber or a dealer or both—will do your best, there are some pleasant little prizes to be picked up. They sounded rather dull as set out in the last number—just money prizes. But it has happened as we hoped. Some of our friends in the trade have come forward at once to lend a hand in stimulating our readers' energies. The Gramophone Co., Ltd., was the first to offer an extra prize to the first "individual reader"; followed closely by Mr. E. M. Ginn, who has offered one of his new portable models, which is in polished teak throughout, with an E.M.G. metal alloy interior horn, a Garrard motor of the latest type, and E.M.G. tone-arm and sound-box. The Gramophone Exchange offers extra prizes to the first, second, and third; and Messrs. Imhof have added a dozen Polydor records to be chosen by the winner of the first prize.

To these firms, one and all, we offer very sincere thanks. It is a splendid start that they have given to our competition, and only one more proof of the unique way in which our readers and advertisers work in with us for the good of all. Dare we hope that the prize list will be even longer next month?

This is how it stands at present:—

To the firm or dealer who has secured the highest number of new subscribers by August 31st—

TWENTY-FIVE POUNDS.

Second Prize .. SEVEN POUNDS.

Third Prize .. THREE POUNDS.

To the individual reader who has secured the highest number of new subscribers by August 31st—

(a) TEN POUNDS.

(b) Beethoven's *Choral Symphony* in an album, given by the Gramophone Co., Ltd.

(c) An E.M.G. portable gramophone, given by Mr. E. M. Ginn.

(d) An "Astra" No. 4 sound-box or other "Astra" proprietary goods to the retail value of Two Guineas, given by the Gramophone Exchange.

(e) Twelve "Polydor" records of winner's own choice, given by Messrs. Alfred Imhof.

Second Prize:—

(a) THREE POUNDS.

(b) An "Astra" No. 2 sound-box or other "Astra" proprietary goods to the retail value of One Guinea, given by the Gramophone Exchange.

Third Prize:—

(a) TWO POUNDS.

(b) "Astra" proprietary goods to the retail value of Half a Guinea, given by the Gramophone Exchange.

To every reader who gets twenty new subscribers—thirty shillings' worth of records (reader's choice).

To every reader who gets ten new subscribers—a copy of "Gramophone Nights" with the Editor's autograph.

*The Editor's decision in all cases will be final.*

DON'T WAIT TO SEE IF THE PRIZES WILL BE FURTHER INCREASED. START AT ONCE.

WRITE FOR ORDER FORMS AND BOMBARD YOUR FRIENDS.

(Keep your enemies for the final assault.)

# National Gramophonic Society Notes

[All communications should be addressed to the Secretary, N.G.S., 58, Frith Street, London, W.1.]

**OBJECT OF THE SOCIETY** :—To aim at achieving for gramophone music what such societies as the Medici have done for the reproduction of the printed book.

**COST OF MEMBERSHIP** :—5s. a year subscription. £3 5s. half-yearly (on March 24th and September 29th) for records, packing and (inland) postage. Twenty-four twelve-inch double-sided records will be issued every year (i.e., they cost 5s. each, with 10s. a year for packing and postage. Members abroad or in the Dominions have a separate account for postage).

The Society is limited to 1,000 members.

The current year began on September 29th, 1924. New members will receive the Debussy and Beethoven quartets already issued until the edition is exhausted (Debussy's Quartet in G minor, Op. 10, and Beethoven's Quartet in E flat, Op. 74. Six records, played by the Spencer Dyke String Quartet).

As far as is practicable, members will be allowed to buy extra sets or extra single records at 5s. each and postage; but in no circumstances may they sell a N.G.S. record to a non-member for less than 7s. 6d.

A list of works suggested for recording by the Society is issued to members, and the Advisory Committee, which consists of the Editor, the London Editor, Messrs. W. R. Anderson, W. W. Cobbett, Spencer Dyke, and Alec Robertson, is largely influenced in framing the programme for the future by the opinions on this list expressed by members. It must be clearly understood, however, that the Society does not intend to duplicate any works published or in course of preparation by any of the Recording Companies, and that the Advisory Committee uses such information as it can acquire in order to avoid this duplication.

All works are recorded complete. They should be played at the rate of 80 revolutions a minute.

## Schönberg and Schubert

**T**HE *Pianoforte Trio in E flat* of Schubert, Op. 100 (on nine sides) and the *String Sextet* of Schönberg, *Verklärte Nacht*, Op. 4 (on seven sides) have now been distributed to all members. These eight records, with the six already sent out, make fourteen for the half-year's output, so that only ten more will be issued before the end of September. The first comments which have come in prove that another great success has been achieved by Mr. Spencer Dyke and his colleagues; and in a splendid notice of the records in the *Daily Telegraph* of March 14th, Mr. Robin Legge drew special attention to the advantage of being able to appreciate the beauty of the Schönberg in privacy, not in "the atmosphere of green seats and garish golden colouring so typical of the modern concert-room." This is a point which members will agree with the Advisory Committee in emphasising. The Schönberg—especially with "K. K.'s" illuminating leaflet—can hardly fail to charm everyone who listens to it quietly and often, though even among members of the N.G.S. there is one who has not tried it at all, and one—the oldest member in age, *on dit*—who wrote, "It is quite astonishing what music can be said to mean, and it hurts nobody. A herd of cows comforting the pelican in the wilderness seems to be more appropriate."

Others, however, think differently. For instance :—

"Beautifully played and recorded, both of them; the Schönberg will, I think, grow on one, the Schubert one can catch hold of straight away."—W. A. Hudson.

"They represent another triumph for the N.G.S., its founder, its excellent Advisory Committee, the recording company, and last, but not least, Mr. Spencer Dyke and his colleagues."—A. Burgess.

"They are up to the standard of those previously issued, and I know no higher praise."—H. Egden.

And, à propos of the last and in hope that these lines will be read by some who have not yet decided to become members of the N.G.S., the following quotation may be added :—

"I have long intended to write you a special letter of praise for the excellence of the recording of the Debussy Quartet. Such understanding of the idiomatic writing of Debussy—such excellent phrasing and general interpretation—deserve a word of special commendation; and the record as it stands is a tribute to the magnificent quartet led by Mr. Spencer Dyke."—Hubert S. Middleton.

## The Cobbett Record

Mr. Cobbett allows us to quote these words from one of the letters which he has received thanking him for the Raff and Rubinstein record which he gave to the first three hundred members of the Society. "It seems to me nothing short of princely to lead such an exquisite quartet, to make permanent records of its playing, and to distribute them to three hundred strangers with whom your only link is a common enthusiasm for music. The records seem to me as perfect as any I have heard, and the music is altogether charming. It will, I am sure, give much pleasure to those of my friends who find the more serious works of chamber music rather forbidding at first."

A lamentable circumstance has given an added significance to this already rare and remarkable record. Mr. W. C. Hann, the 'cellist of the Cobbett Quartet, died last month, a great loss to the musical world as well as to his large circle of friends; so that this record preserves a unique memory of his beautiful playing. Mr. Cobbett, who played chamber music with Hann for thirty years, writes that "he was one of a family of six, father and five sons, all string players. The father played viola sometimes at the Pops and at Ella's Musical Union. They used to play Brahms' sextets among themselves. W. C. H. was very frequently 'cello in the quartets at South Place in the early days. I remember on one occasion taking part there in Dvorák's *Piano Quintet*. Unfortunately the 'cello part was left behind and Hann had to sit behind the pianist and read from the score. He was a most estimable man as well as a fine player."

\* \* \*

As was announced in these notes last month, some of the records were broken in transit, and we were able to replace about half of them with a record of a gavotte of Mr. Cobbett's, played by himself and Mr. Adolf Mann. Since then, by the courtesy of the recording company, we have received some more copies of the original Raff-Rubinstein record, and have been able to send them to those members who had returned broken ones. There are still a few copies over, and these will be sent in strict order of application to any members who wish to add the Cobbett record—so desirable from the collector's point of view, as well as on other grounds—to their library. The price is 5s. *post free*, which should be enclosed with the application.

\* \* \*

## The List of Recorded Chamber Music

This should be in the hands of every member, and should be kept up to date by reference to the monthly reviews in THE GRAMOPHONE. Extra copies can be obtained for 6d. (postage 1d.).

\* \* \*

## Voting for next Records

The voting divided the suggested works into three definite groups—the Mozart *Oboe Quartet* (K.370), the Beethoven *First Rasumovsky* (Op. 59, No. 1), the Brahms' *Piano Quintet* (Op. 34); then the Brahms *String Sextet* (Op. 18), the Ravel *Quartet in F*, the Beethoven *Third Rasumovsky*; and lastly the Mozart *Violin Sonata* (K.377), the Dvorák in *E flat* (Op. 97), and the Debussy *Sonata*. The Committee has asked Mr. Spencer Dyke to undertake the first two works and members will be glad to hear that Mr. Leon Goossens has been persuaded to play the oboe part in the Mozart.

\* \* \*

## Another Maecenas

One of our members has offered to contribute £200 towards the cost of recording a particular quartet! The quartet in question is down for recording by one of the companies, so the Committee has reluctantly declined the offer. But is it not a splendid proof of the spirit which animates our Society?



## FIBRE NEEDLES

IT is evident from correspondence received that an increasing number of readers are taking to the fibre habit, while the confirmed fibreurs are all agog with the new era heralded by the prescription for doping fibres which "Indicator" gave in these columns in May last. At the present moment there are a good many amateurs experimenting with different kinds of dope; and if in the following remarks we seem to have overlooked some particularly good brand, we apologise in advance to those who have a grievance. It is more or less obvious that there is a certain variety in the quality of different boxes made by the same maker, just as there is in boxes of steel needles, and that also a great deal depends upon the user's gramophone, sound-box, cutter, and patience. The instructions issued, for instance, with Mr. "Indicator" Wild's semi-permanent fibre needles should be closely followed.

This is a typical letter from a convert, Mr. James Rainford, of St. Helens. He had always ruled out fibres, "as they required too much hard work; cutting and shaping timber never having been my strong point." But he was interested in the Wild needles and sent for a packet. "I was astonished by the result. I tried the first fibre on a set of records including Galli-Curci, Caruso, orchestras and military bands ("1812" Overture by the Grenadiers, for instance, the roughness of which is calculated to wear the point off Cleopatra's needle), and the Semi-Perm stuck it out for about twelve sides of twelve-inch records. At this point a muzziness was observable and on the thirteenth side was painful. The fourteenth broke the point down. I have tried the Semi-Perm for the last three months and find that on any average programme I can get from eighteen to twenty-four sides, ten inch and twelve inch mixed. There is, of course, some loss of volume compared with steel, but as I prefer music to noise, that is immaterial; but the tone is excellent and the definition very good. They are, in my opinion, quite a wonderful achievement."

Mr. John C. W. Chapman reports fully on some informal tests which he has been making on his "Mahogany Monster" 23A Table Grand Columbia Grafonola, with No. 6 American sound-box, and he finds that the undoped Hall fibre (Messrs. Daws Clarke and Co.) is by no means to be neglected in favour of doped varieties. His conclusions are: "(1) It is a waste of time to dope the flat-sided Hall needle. The excellence of this fibre is an absolute surprise to me. This remark does not apply to the hollow-sided Hall fibre which I do not like. (2) The fact that the Wild needle did not reach twenty sides in my tests is no proof that it will not do so on other gramophones. I know from friends that it justifies its inventor's claims. I consider that it yields a better tone than any of the others, but so far as wear goes the Hall beats it. . . . (3) The success of the doped H.M.V. is somewhat discounted by the fact that out of a box of 100 only between 30 and 40 specimens were any good, and these were 'double-doped,' i.e., they received twice the amount of doping that I bestowed on the Columbias and Halls. . . . (4) The Columbia fibre undoped will play between two and four twelve-inch sides. The quality of these is uniform—there are few duds. Doped they are more successful than their position in my tests indicates. (5) The Hall fibre doped is much the same as the Columbia doped."

The tests were as follows:—

**BAD SURFACE TEST.**—Columbia 7307, *O Divine Redeemer*, Clara Butt. Although the obverse of this record is a fine New Process surface, this side is very rough and undoped fibres (other than Hall) break after a few bars. Order of merit: Hall doped, 1; Wild, 2; double-doped H.M.V., 3; Hall, 4; Columbia, 5. In no case was reproduction good, as this is not a record for fibres.

**NUMBER OF RECORDS WITHOUT CUTTING TEST.**—H.M.V. D.791-4, Brahms' *Op. 51 Quartet*, eight sides; Vocalion D.02104, 02106, 02112, Grieg *Sonata*, six sides; Parlophone E.10080, *Senta's Ballad*, two sides; Old Process Columbia 7161, *Largo al Factotum* (Stracciari), one side; Vocalion J.04114-5, Schumann *Quintet*, four sides; Vocalion K.05060-61, *Peer Gynt Suite* (Life Guards), four sides. Total 25 sides. Difficult records in this lot were the first Grieg *Sonata* disc, *Senta's Ballad*, the end of the second side of which is fatal to undoped fibres (other than Hall), and the *Peer Gynt Suite*, which has been much played by Petmeckys. Results: Hall (25 sides), broke on 26th, 1; double-doped H.M.V. (25 sides), broke on 26th, 2; Wild (14 sides), broke on 15th, 3; Hall doped (11 sides), broke on 12th, 4; Columbia doped (10 sides), broke on 11th, 5.

**"HEAVY" RECORDS TEST.**—H.M.V. D.795, *Prince Igor* ballet

music (Symphony Orchestra and chorus), two very long sides; Vocalion K.05046, "1812" Overture (Life Guards Band), two very powerful sides; H.M.V. C.1129, *Symphonic Poem—Les Préludes* (Liszt) (Coldstream Guards), two extremely heavy sides. Total six sides. Results: Hall, broke on 7th side, 1; Wild, broke on 7th side, 2; double-doped H.M.V., broke on 7th side, 3; Hall doped, broke on 6th side, 4; Columbia doped, broke on 5th side, 5.

The "breaking" record in these two tests was *Memories of Brahms*, side 3, Edith Lorand Orchestra (Parlophone E.10190.) In justice to this powerful disc I must state that it has an excellent surface both sides. It seems to me that differences of groove "cut" in records is one of the most likely causes of a premature end to the point of a "semi-permanent" fibre. That is why I interspersed two exacting Parlophone sides in the middle of the second test. Only Hall and double-doped H.M.V. survived it, and both showed signs of wavering for a few bars. Hall recovered quickly and took the heavy 16th side (Part 2 of *Senta's Ballad*) with amazing brilliance. Even the 25th side was taken by both these fibres creditably; but the difference of the Parlophone "cut" proved too much for their severely tried points."

Mr. Lionel Gilman, of Purley, very kindly undertook to test some doped fibres which were sent to him labelled A, B, and D, and also some varieties of doped Xylopin needles. Of the latter class he reported that they could "not be ranged in any scale with the fibres as regards lasting power. On heavy vocal records they go almost at once. Their tone is most pleasant and on ordinary orchestral or chamber music records they give good detail with fair volume, and with one point I played the whole of the H.M.V. Tchaikovsky's *Pathetic Symphony*, ten sides." This seems to show that the votaries of the Xylopin, who prefer it to fibres because it needs no cutter and at its best has an almost uncanny beauty of tone, will not gain any great advantage by doping the needles. The rest of Mr. Gilman's report we print *in extenso*, adding that the fibre which he calls "A" is a doped Hall fibre; "B" a mystery needle sent in by a scientific reader and apparently metallically doped; and "D" the green Astra fibre sold by the Gramophone Exchange.

"To put bare results first:—

	Tone and volume.	Reliability.	Total marks (maximum 200).
A ..	86 .. ..	81 .. ..	=167
B ..	90 .. ..	80 .. ..	=170
D ..	94 .. ..	97 .. ..	=191

Three splendid needles with little between them on ordinary records.

The marks are the result of averaging over a great number of records of various kinds. In some cases chosen because of their intractability and tendency to break the point of a fibre such as the following:—

*Final Duet from Aida*, Caruso and Gadske (H.M.V., old Celebrity).—This is rather a tearer, and unless the needle has lasted well Caruso's high note at the end does not ring out clear. The green needle played it twice perfectly with one point. A once pretty well. B was unfortunate and spoilt its average.

*Non più Andrai*, Sammarco (H.M.V.).—He takes the high G and it is a good test. Here again the green scored twice and B nearly took it the second time, while A broke down.

On a three-record test consisting of *Solenne in quest' ora* (Caruso and Scotti), duet from *The Pearl Fishers* (Caruso and Ancona), *La Calunnia* (Figaro) (Journet), all H.M.V. The green needle played them all through perfectly while the other two deteriorated somewhat on the third record. I got the most astonishing results on the ordinary orchestral records, the best performance being that of the green needle again and worth putting out in full:—

De Greef and Orchestra (H.M.V.) .. ..	2 sides
Isolde Menges, Beethoven's <i>Violin Concerto</i> (H.M.V.) .. ..	10 "
Lamond, <i>Emperor Concerto</i> (H.M.V.) .. ..	2 "
Beethoven's <i>Ninth</i> (H.M.V.), down to beginning of choral part .. ..	12 "

26 sides.

all without repointing. Had there been any gradual deterioration in the reproduction, so slight that my ear had failed to notice it, I think the entry of the voice in the last record would have given



the show away, but it rang out as firmly as I have ever heard it with a fresh needle, and so continued when the other voices joined in the chorus. I can only come to the conclusion that on decent normal records, if one starts with a well-pointed needle of half to three-quarters length, it will last without repointing for a dozen or so times and sometimes much longer. This rather does away with the theory that fibres are a trouble or that they are always breaking down. As regards volume, it is considerably more with the best needle. In fact, it seems to follow that the fibre which is going to last out, gives the louder, firmer tone from the start. Anyone who wants more volume than one gets with those fibres from Caruso, Ruffo, etc., must have peculiarly constituted eardrums.

It is only fair to Mr. Wild, the original 'doper,' to mention that in a test of his semi-permanent against the green needle I was unable to decide that there was anything much in it between picked specimens, but that the green ones were more carefully selected and better finished. . . .

I do not maintain that the results are reliable except that if there was any material difference between two kinds other than that which might be attributable to a particularly good point or even the more accurate centring of a record for one playing than for another, I think it would have come out in taking an average of marks over such a number of trials.

If a record fits loosely on the turntable spindle you may get it quite straight for one needle and a little askew for another, and the slightest swing is quite enough to turn the scale if there is any tendency to breakdown.

Lastly, we have now got fibres to such a point that there need be no fear of breakdown on any record that is worth playing for any reason but as a test, and so the only point in which they failed is removed."



## HOW TO USE FIBRES

*Our readers will understand our motives in printing below some notes on the use and abuse of fibres, sent in to us by Mr. "Indicator" Wild after the above article was in the printer's hand.*

**M**ANY use fibres. Alas! Many abuse fibres. "Abuse" them in more senses than the one of wrongly using them. What are some of the chief things to bear in mind? First, in the matter of apparatus. Pardon the platitudes, ye who know, for the sake of the many, oh, how many, who don't know.

1. The tone-arm. Short tone-arms are not suitable for fibre playing—shorter, at any rate, than eight inches over all.

2. Tone-arms must work *free*: free all the way across playing portion of record. Goose-neck tone-arms ought to be able to be blown across with a good puff. Continental straight tone-arms' freedom must be guessed at by feeling with box suspended on point of finger.

3. Tracking must be as "Wilsonian" as possible. (See his articles in previous numbers.)

4. Instruments must be level; again use Wilson's method: Turn a single-sided record plain side up on turntable, and whilst revolving put sound-box with needle down as if playing; should it run inwards or outwards, pack up instrument till it remains steady running in line.

5. Place fibre in first groove when starting, and cleanly lift at finish.

6. Get as near 60 degrees as possible for playing angle, but point must come as near as possible to centre of turntable spindle.

Now, as to general practice. With difficult records, such as many Caruso's, sextets, bands, etc., first use the fullest length of fibre out of socket; later on you can find what shorter length will safely do. Lener Quartets and similar light stuff can be played with quite a stump.

Slightly warm fibres before playing, especially if there is any tendency to dampness in room. A good plan is to have a metal air-tight box with a few fibres carried in waistcoat pocket; warmth without humidity is thereby obtained.

Finally, remember, if in spite of thus nurturing in one's bosom a fibre is unsatisfactory in tone or performance, it is part of that innate cussedness of the inanimate, with which an individual fibre may be possessed, and gently consign it to that element to which all cussedness belongs—blazes. Fibres, unfortunately, have this individuality, ungovernable by mortals, that have driven many wild (or to Wild) in this matter."

# Gramophone Tips 1925

By H. T. BARNETT, M.I.E.E.

*THE DAILY TELEGRAPH* says:

"If there is anything that any correspondent wants to know about the details of his machine let him consult H. T. Barnett's 'Gramophone Tips,' a new edition of which is just issued. True the majority of my correspondents seem to understand all that there is to understand in the genus gramophone in a way that few amateurs understood the piano in my youth (or even now). But there are no doubt many to whom this little book will come as a very welcome help and stand-by in case of accidents, while if your opinion does not coincide with that of the author you will have to show good cause why not, for Mr. Barnett plainly knows his job."

\* \* \*

*THE YORKSHIRE POST* says:

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\* \* \*

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# Analytical Notes and First Reviews

## STRAVINSKY'S FIRE BIRD

**HIS MASTER'S VOICE.**—D.958, 959 (12in., 13s.).—Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Albert Coates: *The Fire Bird (L'Oiseau de Feu)* (Stravinsky).

I can imagine strife in many a peaceful home when Part 4 of this suite is reached.

Father: "I call that a noise."

Son or Daughter, with that desire to irritate so conspicuous in happy families: "Noise? A term used by the Elizabethans to denote a band or company of musicians."

(Confused sounds from father.)

Mother, reading newspaper, quite irrelevantly remarks "How terrible these Bolsheviks are!"

Son, of course, misunderstands, and replies with withering scorn: "Naturally you cannot understand that the juxtaposition of tonal masses, the empirical atonalities, etc., etc." (until the entire family is flattened out!)

The Firebird music suffers more from being detached from its proper setting—the theatre—than did the later work *Petrouchka*. It will sound extraordinarily scrappy and disjointed to anyone who has not seen the ballet. Moreover, the titles affixed to the records do not correspond very satisfactorily with the plot given in the supplement. Further, Mr. Percy Scholes' excellent analytical notes, done for a B.B.C. concert at Covent Garden, from which I have culled some information, present the music in a different sequence to that given here. Perhaps, therefore, the following analysis, merely a personal interpretation fused with the main outlines of the story, will be helpful.

*Part 1.*—An enchanted garden with something sinister and evil lurking in the background. A scene bathed in half-light. After many obscure mutterings the air suddenly grows tremulous with sound, a rich glow dispels the shadows. The wonderful exotic fire bird flutters into the garden.

*Part 2.*—She dances round a silver tree loaded with golden fruit, seeming to the young Prince Ivan (hidden in the bushes) the loveliest thing he has ever seen. Greatly daring he captures her, but she begs to be released, offering him a gift of one of her feathers.

*Part 3.*—She departs. The garden is now filled with a band of maidens headed by a Princess. They too dance with charming vivacity and have a game with the golden apples. At dawn they disappear.

*Part 4.*—The Prince is seeking them when suddenly there appears the monstrous retinue of the evil spirit of the place, the demon king Kastchei! The magic feather preserves Ivan's life, but the Firebird also comes to his rescue. She makes the bevy of wild Indians, warrior Turks, Chinamen, Clowns, Imps, Hobgoblins, Ogres, and Apes burst into a frenzied dance. While they are thus engaged she directs Ivan to smash a huge egg in a casket in which is hidden the demon's life. This done the monster dies and the loathsome creatures vanish. Ivan marries the princess.

The highly coloured orchestration rather blinds one to the lack of any real "meat" in the music. It is a positive relief on reaching Part 3 to encounter a genuine tune, one which seems better than it actually is by reason of what has gone before. Rhythmically the music is feverishly alive; melodically it has to rely on actual or spurious folk tunes for sustenance. These sound very like concessions. The final section with its blocks of harmonies pushed this way and that makes a terrific din that fits the stage picture, but is meaningless without. As a study for *Petrouchka* the music has a definite interest and as all of us like a bit of "twopence coloured" at times, these records will find a place in our cabinets. Whatever criticisms one may make of this Debussy-Scriabine-Stravinsky confection, there are none to be made about the recording. Real oboe tone, that floating incisive quality, is heard at last; the string background, the occasional solo violin relief, the writhings and posturings of the wind and brass are excellently reproduced. Everyone, at least, will be able to take genuine pleasure in the Dance of the Princesses (Part 3).

N. P.

## "DEATH AND TRANSFIGURATION"

**COLUMBIA.**—L.1621, 1622, 1623 (12in., 22s. 6d.).—The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Bruno Walter: *Tod und Verklärung* (Richard Strauss), five sides, and *Dance of the Sprites* from *The Damnation of Faust* (Berlioz).

It is some time since H.M.V. gave us *Death and Transfiguration*. This new recording introduces (for, I think, the first time) the orchestra that plays for the Royal Philharmonic Society's concerts, and gives it an exceedingly good send-off. If it does not manage to make every note in the score clear, that is not its fault. Only in one point is failure to be noted. The drum-strokes, that ought to be so significant, are dry—toneless. I suggested, in an earlier review, that experiments might well be made, to find out if there are ways of getting better timpani quality upon a disc. This record shows the need for such attempts.

The music belongs to that earliest period of Strauss's full development, when he was forsaking the classical models to follow in the dangerous, but for him triumphant, path of the symphonic poem that Liszt had carved out. Compared with some of the music of to-day, the Strauss tone-poems, once so startling, seem old-fashioned. But theirs is a good fashion, that did not (in those early days, at any rate) put on eccentricity, that pitiful garment wherewith some seek to cover the nakedness of their invention nowadays.

A poem is prefaced to the score, by Alexander Ritter, but it was only written when the music had been composed. The "programme" is that of a dying man, who in his last fever recalls the scenes of his life, and finally passes from the world.

How wonderfully the opening conveys the sick-room atmosphere, the ebbing of the tide of life! The broken rhythm, the ominous wood-wind chords, the faint breath of the flute, all suggest the heaviness, the listlessness of spirit, that envelop the man. A faint phrase of half a dozen notes on the flute (page 8, min. score) is suggestive of the shadow of a smile on the sleeping man's lips. This theme is heard, in a different mood, early in side 3, on the whole of the wood-wind. It is a good example of the method of theme-transformation upon which the composer worked—changing the meaning of his subjects according to the mood of the poetic basis, while retaining their main outlines, and so binding the work together by this kind of unity of idea. An innocent, child-like melody upon the oboe succeeds (octave leap, followed by scalic descent). This may be considered one of those memories of happy youth that flit through the dying man's mind.

Side 2 begins with the excited strains that speak of feverish unrest. In particular, a short figure, several times repeated, and followed by a longer phrase (which is heard at once) is a keystone-motive of this section of the work. The conflict between will and the powers of the grave is violent. The theme of *Redemption* (rising boldly, with one jump of an octave) is given out by the brass, not far from the end of side 2. The fever abates, and another sweet remembrance of childhood comes (flute solo, over swaying violin accompaniment). Immediately before the side ends a brisker motive (harp and reeds) suggests the care-free boy. Life passes swiftly before the eye of the mind, and we are soon in the midst of its full surge and struggle. The hardness of the fight is brought home to us. At the end of side 3 the *Redemption* theme is heard again. The last convulsion ends, the hand of Death is laid upon him, and the remaining portion of the work, calm and serene, suggests the repose of the soul in bliss.

Within the limits of music's suggestive scope, this is the powerful, true, and essentially simple exposition of a poetic idea. As a notable example of Strauss's genius almost at the finest, the work is of interest to all music lovers. The music, *qua* music, is worthy; it does not wholly depend upon the "programme" for its values.

The Berlioz fragment is one of the three or four favourite extracts from a neglected opera of this great master of imagination and of orchestral effect. The dance is a perfectly delightful thing, admirably played—clear, piquant, and full of colour and grace.

K. K.

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## MENDELSSOHN'S ITALIAN SYMPHONY

VOCALION.—K.05148, 05149, 05150 (12in., 13s. 6d.).—The Aeolian Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Stanley Chapple: Symphony No. 4 in A, Op. 90 (Mendelssohn).

Although, if we include early and immature works, the number of Mendelssohn's symphonies runs well into double figures, yet there are only two of these that have found an abiding place in the orchestral repertoire, the *Italian Symphony*, and the *Scotch Symphony*. It is the first of these that the Vocalion Company have recorded (complete) this month.

The *Italian Symphony* appeared in 1833 when the composer was twenty-four years of age; but its conception dates back in reality to the visit he made to Italy two years earlier (in 1831). That visit was one of the happiest times of his life, and gaiety and light-heartedness are reflected in every movement of the work except, perhaps, the second, in which a rather deeper note is struck.

The first movement (a quick one) opens without any introduction, the sprightly subject appearing in the third and following bars on the violins. In due course a change of key brings a certain amount of new material, but there is nothing of sufficient importance to be styled a second subject and the principal theme already mentioned is never lost sight of throughout the movement for more than a moment or two. The development begins with a change from the key of E to that of A minor. It deals with most of the existing material and introduces some new phrases besides containing a lot of ingenious contrapuntal work; the break between the two sides comes in the middle of it. Just before the return of the principal subject in the original key there is a place where the gaiety is checked for a moment and above the sighing of the strings we hear long held notes on the oboe. But the recapitulation soon re-establishes the prevailing mood and an elaborate *coda* brings the movement to a joyous conclusion.

The slow movement starts with an arresting unison phrase, after which the 'cellos and basses take up a steadily-moving *staccato* bass that is the characteristic feature of the piece and continues throughout apart from short interruptions. Above this the strings and wood-wind sing various melodies of a somewhat grave nature. The whole thing is full of clever counterpoint and interesting orchestral devices. As a boy I possessed a piano arrangement of it under the title of "Pilgrim's March." I can find in the score no warrant for this title, but it very fairly expresses the general mood of a movement that is universally acknowledged to be one of the composer's masterpieces.

The third movement is a *Minuet* and *Trio*. The material is slight—a suave and graceful tune on the strings—but it never seems inadequate on account of the skill of the contrapuntal treatment and the interest of the orchestration. The way in which the opening phrase is sometimes introduced in canon (one instrument following another) is especially noticeable. The *Trio* strikes a graver note once more. A distinctive theme is heard on horns and bassoons with comments from violin and flute, and is subsequently taken up by the rest of the orchestra. The break between sides four and five occurs soon after the return of the original minuet. Side five completes the movement, which ends with a short but imaginative reference to the theme of the *Trio*.

The same side opens the *Finale*. This is entitled *Saltarello*. To explain the word I cull the following from "Grove":—"Saltarello. A popular Roman dance . . . The step is quick and hopping and the dance gradually increases in rapidity. The music is generally in the minor." The characteristic rhythm is given out at the beginning of the movement and the flutes soon introduce a melody founded upon it. Before long a new theme in the same rhythm is announced by the violins. The movement is continued on the sixth side, but I do not propose to follow it in detail as the unmistakable *Saltarello* rhythm persists most of the time and explains itself. I will only draw attention to the point (fairly near the beginning of the last side) where this rhythm disappears temporarily and is succeeded by a section consisting of quick notes (triplets) of equal length, mostly on the strings. This is actually a *Tarantella*. There is also a remarkable passage close to the end where above the strings busy with the *Saltarello* rhythm the wood-wind gives a distant reminiscence of the opening theme of the first movement.

The orchestration, as I have suggested, is full of interest and novelty. The only weakness is the brass. Mendelssohn was writing for the natural instruments that we find in Beethoven's symphonies and earlier. It was not until later that the invention of the valve horn and valve trumpet enabled composers to feel at home with this part of the orchestra. Mendelssohn's treatment of his trumpets

in particular is rather clumsy; it seems a pity that he didn't leave them out altogether; they are not really necessary here. The playing, too, has aggravated rather than minimised this defect, and the rest of the orchestra is occasionally swamped by a blatant and pointless blare. In this set of records, too, there is once or twice a miscalculation with the drum, which is sometimes too loud and at others quite inaudible. Apart from these minor drawbacks I have nothing but praise for a notable achievement that will, I fancy, be welcomed with acclamation by many.

P. P.

## BEEHOVEN'S EIGHTH SYMPHONY

PARLOPHONE.—E.10256, 10257, 10258 (12in., 13s. 6d.).—Opera House Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Weissmann: Eighth Symphony, Op. 93 (Beethoven).

It is a great thing to have classics on the gramophone, but an even greater one to have classics in cheap form. The Parlophone and Vocalion Companies are the "Everyman" edition of records. The former company is wise in issuing most months not only a symphony, but also an overture or tone-poem, so that all tastes are catered for and modern music given its due share. Complete works on Columbia or H.M.V. records lie outside practical politics for many purses, so that no one can complain of the duplication of—as in this case—already issued works. What an attractive symphony the "Eighth" is! The grace of the second subject of the first movement—the wholly delightful second movement, which has recorded particularly well—the horns' trio in the *Minuet*—the tremendous *finale*—impress themselves at once on the listener. Further study reveals many points of beauty and humour that at first pass unnoticed in the general effect. But, as in all great works of art, even those passages one knows, or thinks one knows, inside out, never fail to awaken a thrill when they do arrive. They are eternally satisfying. The famous C sharp in the last movement fails of effect in the recording. It goes off like a damp squib! Otherwise, the beauty of the string tone is as conspicuous as ever and the complete impression entirely satisfactory.

N. P.

## DON JUAN

PARLOPHONE.—E.10254, 10255 (12in., 9s.).—Opera House Orchestra, conducted by Ed. Moerike: Don Juan, Symphonic Poem (Richard Strauss). In four parts.

Strauss is reported to have said: "There is no such thing as Abstract Music; there is good music and bad music. If it is good it means something; and then it is Programme Music." There is quite a Shavian touch about that! *Don Juan* will probably mean something different, but always something, to everyone who hears it. For Strauss has prefixed three passages from Lenau's dramatic poem of the same name to his score which deals in a generalised way with the amorous career of the Don, whereas the programme given in concert-hall analytical notes is much more particularised. Presumably it has the authorisation of the composer. We can, if we wish, identify the first impetuous tune with Don Juan, the clarinet solo with Donna Anna (Part 1), the oboe and horn duet with the Countess and the hero (Part 2), the Carnival music with Part 3, and the death of Don Juan with Part 4. There is at least no mistaking his dying shudders; the representation of these is not, Newman says, a mere intellectual eccentricity, but a really poignant emotional effect. The same critic remarks that "when the nature of the poetic programme allows the musician to take the bit into his mouth . . . we get some pages of the finest development that the history of the symphonic poem can show." It is just when Strauss is checked by the necessity of transition from one character to another in following out his programme that there are such weak passages, mere padding, as those immediately preceding the duet with the Countess. But how exquisite the clarinet and oboe tunes are! No wonder the two women proved irresistible. One tune somewhere is supposed to portray the third type of woman to attract Don Juan, the unsophisticated Zerlina, but I must confess that I could not discover it. The strings and brass stand out very well in the recording; the horns are especially beautiful. The wood-wind are generally a little too weak in tone. The interpretation of the brilliant score is vivid and full of vitality.

N. P.

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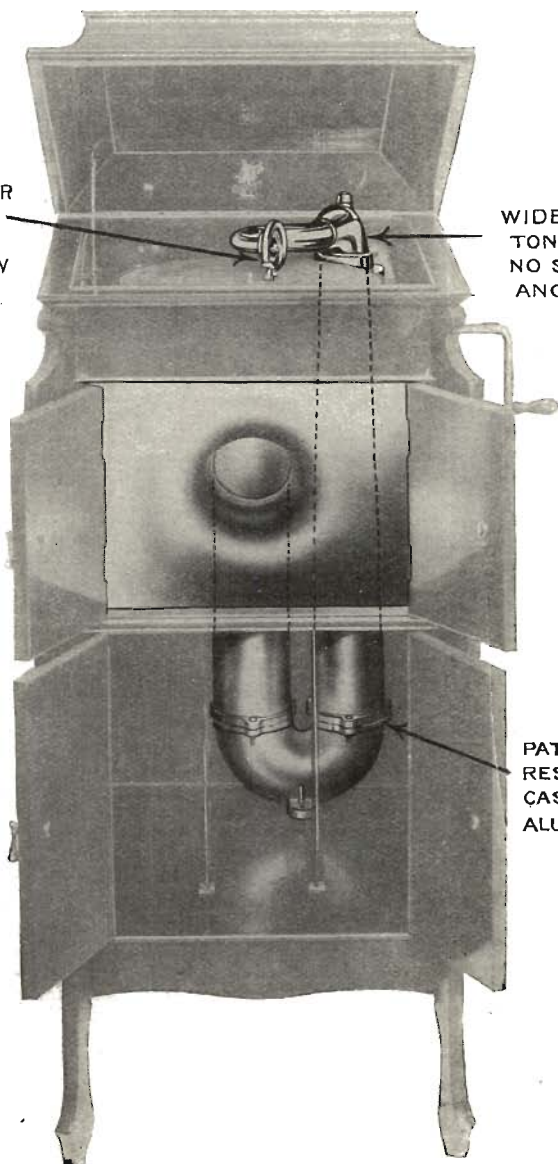
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## BACH'S CONCERTO IN D MINOR

**COLUMBIA.**—L. 1624, 1625, and 1626.—**Harriet Cohen** (pianoforte), with orchestra conducted by Sir H. J. Wood: **Concerto No. 1 in D minor, for piano and strings** (Bach).

If one remembers two things about the concerto of Bach's day, the enjoyment of this fine example will be increased: the construction is such that the work's growth is, perhaps, less obvious than is that of a modern concerto; and the orchestration does not offer the coloured joys of, say, the Tchaikovsky *B flat minor Piano Concerto*. Other days, other ways; Bach builds upon rhythmic ideas—quite small themes, which he chose because they could be developed, after the remarkable way of the man, into tightly built, trim movements, every bar of which brims with vitality. That quality strikes one always, in Bach. The technical observer takes off his hat—and keeps it off—to the great old man; in that respect particularly he was without a peer in an age when the weaving of strands in the vital employment of rhythm was perfected to a marvellous degree. When one studies the rhythmic resource of this music, and sees how the name of rhythm is taken in vain by cheapjacks of to-day, who merely play with time-patterns, repeating them *ad nauseam*, one is amazed that anyone could be imposed on by the tomfoolery of these present-day parrots of music, with their appallingly limited schemes. However, they have their day, and soon will cease to be; Bach goes on in triumph. These concertos of his were for one or more keyboard instruments (harpsichord, not piano) with small orchestra—sometimes strings only. Hence we must not expect very highly-coloured pianistics. Lastly, the style of the day in the use of the orchestra was somewhat modest. The instruments were not played off against each other, after the fully developed manner we know; and the basses generally played the same main outline as the left hand had, on the keyboard.

**First Movement. Allegro.**—A strongly rhythmical tune is given out in octaves, the keyboard part being the same as that for the strings. The pianist generally reserves his entry for bar 7, where the lively-running subject begins, with a sort of little scurry (an extra couple of notes) now and again; strings comment for a few bars; after the resumption of the opening bars, with the piano's tune in A minor, the soloist continues with arpeggios, while the orchestra develops the opening theme. Then the piano takes it over, adding, as an element of rhythmic extension, some downward scale runs. Strings next have widely-jumping arpeggios figures, resuming the opening theme, with the pianist, shortly. Then the solo part daintily dances about within the compass of a few notes, first violins accompanying with a smoother tune, in longer notes than those used before for any length of time. This goes on for a couple of pages, the development being then resumed, after a cadenza, a passage for the pianist alone. There are still more varieties of rhythmic device, before the ideas are summed up in the opening theme, used as a coda.

**Second Movement.**—This shows the austere side of Bach. There is something mysterious in the opening theme, given out in octaves by all (13 bars). This forms the basis of the whole movement, appearing as it does in the lowest part, in full form, with occasional extension. As soon as it has been first expounded, the soloist adds a counter-melody, which is imitated by the first violins. Some beautiful flowing counterpoint accompanies each statement of the main theme. The spirit of the music is soothing, spacious, and beneficent. A final statement of the theme in simple form concludes the movement.

**Third Movement.**—This begins with one of those runs down the scale that make one think of Bach as a well-trained athlete, slipping so easily from the mark at the pistol-shot. The pianist trips down the scale in another way, very soon, and begins to develop the rhythm of *tati tum tati tum*. Anon, in accordance with the key-relation custom of the day, the original theme returns, in A minor this time. On its statement being ended, the pianist trips up the keyboard in arpeggio notes ornamented, and then begins to run in twelve-notes-to-a-bar rhythm. All the developments of rhythm cannot well be followed on paper, but the brilliancy of the solo part, and the way in which the thing is bound together, are points for admiration; while the virility and good-heathy breeziness of the music are qualities that everyone can appreciate.

The piano tone is, on the whole, good, but not so good as this excellent artist will get, I think, when she has had more experience in recording. The slow movement's long notes do not sustain very well, and there is a trace of tang here and there. Her finesse and spirit are for our highest praise.

K. K.

## DVOŘÁK'S NIGGER QUARTET

**VOCALION.**—K. 05132, 05133, 05134 (12in., 13s. 6d.).—**The Spencer Dyke String Quartet: Quartet in F major, Op. 96** (Dvorák).

Although the score of this most genial of quartets makes no mention of the title "Nigger," describing the work simply as "Quartet in F major, Op. 96," there can be no doubt of the suitability of the nick-name by which it is generally known. It was in 1892 that Dvorák went to America to take up a post in New York. The keen interest in folk-song and local colour which had already shown itself in his treatment of Bohemian music not unnaturally led him to the study of the American Negro tunes. Here, in the "Spirituals" and other songs, his genius found just that type of material that it could best turn to account. Everyone knows that these negro melodies and rhythms are the source of modern "Rag-time" and its derivatives, and it is interesting to compare Dvorák's works in this *genre*, the *New World Symphony*, Op. 95, and this quartet, Op. 96 (both written in 1893) with recent efforts to adapt "jazz" to the tastes of the cultivated musician. But there is one aspect of the matter that has been little dwelt upon. A glance at Korbay's arrangements of Hungarian songs or at Dvorák's own "Songs my mother taught me" shows us that the syncopation characteristic of the negro melodies was also a feature of the tunes of Dvorák's own country. No doubt this had a lot to do with his sympathy towards the American music. Incidentally, too, it disposes of the claim that the syncopated style is a unique product of America!

**First Movement.**—The first subject, with its typical syncopation, appears on the viola in bar three beneath a *tremolo* on the violins. The music deals with this idea in a section of great vivacity, till at length a decrease of both tone and speed leads to the second subject, also a syncopated tune, introduced *pianissimo* on the violin. This quickly brings us to the development which is based mainly on the first subject and is full of colour. The second side begins towards the end of this section at a point where we have a clever piece of contrapuntal writing taking us gradually back to the recapitulation. This and the *coda* are full of variety but need no description.

**Slow Movement.**—Above a rhythmic accompaniment the violin sings a plaintive serenade which is presently repeated by the 'cello in its high register. A second tune is treated in the same way. Then (side four) the violin gives out yet a third melody, also repeated. So far the rhythmic accompaniment has continued without interruption, but now it ceases, and the 'cello plays once more the first of the three tunes against a background of alternate *arco* and *pizzicato* chords on the other instruments.

**Scherzo.**—A bright theme with an individual rhythm is announced by violin and 'cello, and forms the basis of the *Scherzo*. The *Trio* brings a change to the minor key and contains three ideas. The first two are played simultaneously on the two violins at the outset; the third appears a moment later on the violins (while the 'cello repeats the second) and is easily recognised by its jerky rhythm. The *Scherzo* returns in due course, after which the *Trio* is played again in a slightly more elaborate form. Another repetition of the *Scherzo* completes the movement.

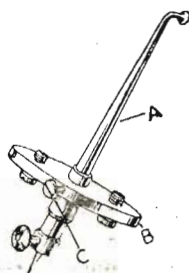
**Finale.**—This is a *rondo* whose principal subject is that heard at the outset on the violin. After a while a change of key brings a less vivacious and more flowing melody on the same instrument. Next a repetition of the main subject leads to a new episode in slower time. But the irrepressible *Rondo* soon creeps back, and pursues its hilarious course to the end, the return of the flowing melody causing only a momentary interruption in the prevailing gaiety.

The Vocalion Company deserve congratulation on the recording of this delightful work without cuts. They are very fortunate in having secured the Spencer Dyke Quartet to play it for them, and the rendering has just that sparkle and whimsicality that the music demands. It is also remarkably clear as a whole, a virtue for which performers and reproducers must share the credit. One has occasionally to take the lowest notes of the 'cello on trust, but the passages in which this instrument is using its alto register (and these are very numerous) are peculiarly successful. The viola is a little on the loud side once or twice, but we shall not complain of this when we remember how often the instrument is allowed to sink into complete inaudibility in records of quartets.

P. P.

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## THE WALDSTEIN SONATA

**HIS MASTER'S VOICE.**—D.960, 961, 962 (12in., 19s. 6d.).—**Frederic Lamond** (pianoforte): **Waldstein Sonata in C major, Op. 53** (Beethoven), five sides, and **Scherzo from Sonata in E flat, Op. 31** (Beethoven).

A very definite success. With one exception—the brief Adagio—the piano tone rings out clear and true. The illusion is nearly complete—certainly complete enough to enable one to concentrate entirely on the music without being irritated with the similitude of twangings on the banjo. Of course the work is very well suited to the gramophone as so much of the music lies at either end of the piano and not in the middle, which is the danger spot.

Mr. Lamond plays from the head rather than the heart, which, indeed, is required by the masculine vigour of the music. But I could wish for a shade more responsiveness to the beauty of the second subject of the first movement. The Rondo seems to be on the slow side, but Beethoven has marked it *Allegretto moderato*, and in view of the *Coda* and the general technical difficulty of the music it is hard to see how the over-deliberateness of the chief subject could be avoided. The spare side of the third record is given to the Scherzo from the *E flat Sonata*, Op. 31. It is, unusually for Beethoven, in 2/4 time. It sounds to me irresistibly like a marching song, and the suggestion is reinforced by the trumpet-like chords of the second subject—played with beautiful crispness by Mr. Lamond. There is nothing humorous or scherzo-like in the music, but a fine “open-airness” which does one good to hear. Here is a very brief analysis of the “Waldstein.”

**FIRST MOVEMENT.** *Allegro con brio*. Parts I and II.—The first subject is in two phrases: one in the bass, the other, answering, in the treble. The second subject played as a bare melody, without its harmonies, is little more than an up and down scale, but when these beautiful clothes are put on it how lovely the result is. Look out for Beethoven's ornamentation of it. The repetition of a phrase in several keys just before the development strikes one as constructively rather weak for a master of the art. The recapitulation starts at the beginning of Part II and is rounded off with a magnificent *coda* based on both subjects.

Part III opens with the short introduction to the Rondo—*Adagio molto*—which Beethoven substituted for the slow movement he had written. This latter was published separately as “Andante in F.” In the few bars of this adagio the composer strikes a grave contemplative note, a great contrast to the displays of virtuosity on either side of it. Then comes the blithe rondo, terminated by a tremendous *coda*. In this the unfortunate player has to trill with one finger and play the rondo tune with another of the same hand! No wonder the trill is always too loud, the tune too soft.

The doubled speed of the chief tune makes an exhilarating conclusion to a fine work.

## BRUNSWICK

(March Issues.)

50015 (12in., 8s.).—**Leopold Godowsky** (piano): **Polonaise Militaire and Waltz in E flat** (Chopin).

15076 (10in., 5s. 6d.).—**Florence Easton** (soprano): **Heart o' Mine** (Herbert) and **Over the Hills** (Logan).

15085 (10in., 5s. 6d.).—**Giacomo Lauri-Volpi** (tenor): **Vesti la Giubba** from **Pagliacci** (Leoncavallo) and **Brindisi** from **Cavalleria Rusticana** (Mascagni).

10150 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—**Giuseppe Danise** (baritone): **Song of the Volga Boatmen** and **When the King went forth to War** (Kënemann).

The piano tone on this record is very full and brilliant, so that the music under the flexible fingers of Leopold Godowsky makes its due effect. The E flat waltz is rather too much impregnated with the salon atmosphere to be attractive to me. I like Chopin least in his waltzes.

Oh, Miss Easton! Need you have so sorely disappointed us? Two indifferent ballads from one of the best Metropolitan Opera House artists—enough to make the angels weep. I sincerely hope you will not again rate our powers of appreciation so low.

A correspondent voices a grievance on this point also. He says Miss Easton's rôles range from *Zaza* and *Fordiligi* in *Così fan tutte* to *Isolde*, that she is now in her prime; that, in fact, she has it in

her to produce some very fine records. Even the present record warrants that. Brunswick Co. please note and remedy without delay.

Lauri-Volpi has made an excellent record of two well-known arias which are splendidly recorded. Perhaps a little more restraint in *Vesti la giubba* would have been welcome, but Canio, of course, was “all out.” Being a 10in. record, the attractive instrumental conclusion is lopped off.

Frederick Schorr's record has not come. It sounds tempting. His Polydor records reveal him as a magnificent singer.

Giuseppe Danise was trying for a fall in singing two songs which Chaliapine has made peculiarly his own, and he has come a bit of a cropper just because he reproduces some of the greater artist's effects instead of giving an entirely individual rendering. Particularly I mean that drop below pitch almost into speech that, however it may offend against the canons of style, Chaliapine does so effectively. The songs are well sung and recorded and will be quite enjoyable to anyone who is unfamiliar with the Russian artist's discs; but if one has heard him that is the last word.

By the way the Labour Party should take over *When the King went forth to war*. It is anti-war and anti-king. The lot of Hodge the labourer, a mere pawn in the game, is contrasted with that of the king who stays well in the rear of the battle and takes all the credit of the victory (mark the bells), while the peasant lies uncared for save for the bluebells that toll his funeral knell.

## PARLOPHONE

(April issues.)

E.10259, 10260 (12in., 9s.).—**Edith Lorand Orchestra**: **Il Trovatore Selection** (Verdi).

E.10263 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Emanuel Feuermann** ('cello): **Rondo, Op. 94** (Dvorák) and **Serenade, Op. 54** (Popper).

E.10265 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Jamieson Dodds** (baritone): **The trumpet shall sound** (Handel); and **Jessie Broughton** (contralto): **The Lost Chord** (Sullivan).

E.10264 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Max Hirzel** (tenor): **Lohengrin's Narration and Ahntest du Nicht** from **Lohengrin** (Wagner).

E.10266 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Comm. Antonio Cortis** (tenor): **Di tu se' fedele**, from **Un Ballo in Maschera** (Verdi), and **Avete torto**, from **Gianni Schicchi** (Puccini).

Four sides seem perhaps rather excessive for a selection from *Il Trovatore*, but the abounding tunes have been so well contrasted, and are so well played, particularly Miss Lorand's solos and a 'cello solo, that no feeling of monotony is induced. It may be well to state that *Ah! che la morte* occurs on the third side! One virtue of these selections is that one can begin anywhere, which always seems slightly indecent in continuous music.

Feuermann's solos are rather too florid to display the exquisite quality of his tone which is quite free from the tightness recording often gives to the 'cello. The instrument is not really suited to rapid passage work, which always looks and sounds, to me, slightly ridiculous. Dvorák's *Rondo* is an attractive piece of music and Popper's *Serenade*, as becomes a famous teacher and player of the 'cello, is naturally very effective. Those whose ears become cloyed with the *Lost Chord* will be refreshed with the vigour of *The trumpet shall sound*; though Mr. Dodds sounds much more than does the trumpet, whose gentle tone would hardly awaken the dead, whereas the singer's ringing voice should certainly bestir them. It is a fine rendering apart from the defect alluded to.

Why will Lohengrins always shout their music? The *Narration* is not an electioneering speech but a deeply mystical story which should, I always feel, be scarcely sung above a whisper. The violins are whispering until the robust tenor obliterates them. Max Hirzel has evidently a very good voice, but he must learn how to restrain it.

I am very grateful to Signor Cortis for choosing Rinuccio's delightful aria from Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*. In this the composer blends humour and lyricism very ingeniously. Witness the telling introduction of a phrase of *O mio babbino caro*. The name *Gianni Schicchi* was an inspiration for a comedy-opera. I would not be alone, I think, in welcoming a complete recording of this sparkling little work, though the claims of Mozart are now our first consideration. Signor Cortis sings splendidly in both his arias.

N. P.



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704. **Skye Boat Song.** (Lawson.)  
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**Afton Water.** (Alex Hume.)  
Sung by Herbert Thorpe (Tenor), with Piano Accompaniment.  
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**The Lea Rig** (Reid arr. Blamphin).  
Sung by Herbert Thorpe, (Tenor) Piano Acempt.  
724. **Song of the Volga Boatmen** (arr. Chaliapine-Koenemann)  
**I fear no Foe** (C. Pinsuti).  
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## COLUMBIA

(April Issues.)

- 7369 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Pablo Casals ('cello): Kol Nidrei.
- 9031 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—William Heseltine (tenor): Eily Mavournen from *The Lily of Killarney* (Benedict); and *Thus when the Sun* from *Samson* (Handel).
- L.1627 (12in., 7s. 6d.).—Leo Strockoff (violin): Zigeunerweisen and Zapateado (Sarasate). With piano.
- L.1628 (12in., 7s. 6d.).—Norman Allin (bass): Titarel, the hero pure, and Thou could'st do murder from *Parsifal* (Wagner). With orchestra.
- 3605 (10in., 3s.).—J. H. Squire Instrumental Trio: Hungarian Dance No. 5 (Brahms) and Spring Song (Mendelssohn).
- 3607 (10in., 3s.).—Topliss Green (baritone): Cape Horn Gospel and A Sailor's Prayer from *Four Salt Water Ballads* (F. Keel).
- D.1506 (10in., 5s.).—William Murdoch (piano): Arabesque in E (Debussy) and Melody in F (Rubinstein).
- D.1507 (10in., 5s.).—Dora Labbette (soprano), with string quartet: Elizabethan Love Songs (arr. by F. Keel): (a) Sorrow, sorrow, stay (Dowland), (b) Her rosie cheekes (Campion), (c) What if I speede (R. Jones).
- D.1508 (10in., 5s.).—Dora Labbette:—Elizabethan Songs (arr. by F. Keel): (a) Sweet was the song (J. Attey), Whither runneth my sweetheart? and What thing is love? (Bartlet).
- 3545 (10in., 3s.).—Arthur Jordan (tenor): A Sea Reiver's Song and An Island Sheiling Song, from *Songs of the Hebrides* (M. Kennedy-Fraser). With harp.

Casals is superb in the old Hebrew melody that has been recorded so many times; never has it been so expressively sent forth. The piano tone supports well, and altogether this is a record most sweetly soothing, with moments of greater animation, when the tune is decorated.

In the old-fashioned Benedict air Mr. Heseltine is pretty good, though rather over-intense. He is too square-cut in the Handel. More ease is wanted to enable this voice, which has some excellent material in it, to be heard with full pleasure. He must learn to keep it quite steady, too.

The fiddlers give us small stuff this month. One had begun to hope that the tasty bits were giving place to solid fare. Mr. Strockoff's showy pieces are thrown off with ease, though occasionally with rather less than absolute neatness of contour. This is quite the way to exhibit these bits of drawing-room Spain. Sammons plays a trifle by a modern Russian, Juon, that reminds us of a sunnier clime—though it is but a light recreation of a type not dissimilar from those played by his brother fiddler. The version of *Cherry Ripe* sounds as if a mild "modern" had been at it, while mildly intoxicated—"not so as you would say drunk, but having drink taken," as the charming Irish phrase has it. I see this is labelled "Bishop-Scott." Let's hope it is not Cyril Scott.

The touching music in which Gurnemanz rebukes Parsifal for killing the swan is delivered by Allin with moving simplicity. In such moments this singer is at his best. His other passage is well done also, though the second pleases me best.

The slight pieces of the Squire Trio are in good taste, and are played in a manner that gives considerable pleasure. Perchance the *Spring Song* loses a little of its delicacy when the melody is rather solidly soloed.

The Keel *Salt Water Ballads* have been commended before, as sea songs with more than the usual allowance of fancy and musicianship in them. Mr. Green delivers them very clearly, and except for a few notes, that have not quite full tonal value, his performance is manly, straightforward, and eminently appropriate.

Mr. Murdoch, like the string players, disports this month among the oddments of music—agreeable oddments, but we do not want too many of them from a player who is capable of such good things. The newer piano tone of the gramophone is in pleasant evidence here. On the whole I do not think this month's records demonstrate the advance so well as did last month's, but there is no doubt at all that better days have come, in this branch of recording. Apart from the known difficulties inherent in the instrument, a great deal depends on the player, and some pianists whose rather hard tone does not perhaps irk us very much on the concert platform are not nearly so happy in recording. (Some of the factors in our appreciation of a performance must be dependent on other than purely aural

considerations, as the author of an interesting new book—Otto Ortmann, in "The Physical Basis of Piano Touch and Tone"—says. I recommend this volume, by the way, as an interesting attempt to get to the root of several fascinating problems. It is published by Kegan Paul).

There is cool charm in the *Elizabethan Love Songs*, to which the quartet accompaniment seems so perfectly suited. Miss Labbette's rather impersonal tone may be reckoned as fitting well here, but we should be all the better pleased if she could get a bit more warmth and body into it. Bartlet's ditties are especially jolly—the daintiest conceits. How much these old-timers can teach us in rhythmic subtlety we are only just beginning to realise. Hundreds of people who write music haven't begun to think of the possibilities of the fine mating of words and music. The Elizabethans had it all at their finger-tips, and every lover of rich art can enjoy their delicious songs, of which these examples are excellently selected specimens.

Mr. Jordan is so sincere a singer that he always appeals to our sympathy. There is a trace of uncertainty in his long notes here that rather detracts from our enjoyment in his thoughtful, modest singing. The harp's tone is tenuous, but not out of the picture.

K. K.

## HIS MASTER'S VOICE

(March Issues.)

- D.A.633 (10in., 6s.).—Paderewski (piano): Mazurkas in A flat and in F sharp minor, Op. 59, Nos. 2 and 3 (Chopin).
- D.B.810 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Mary Lewis (soprano): Ah! ie suis seule (Act II.) and Te souvient-il (Méditation) from *Thaïs* (Massenet).
- D.A.628 (10in., 6s.).—John McCormack (tenor): In Waldeseinsamkeit and Die Mainacht (Brahms).
- D.B.757 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Chaliapine (bass): The Last Voyage, Op. 17, No. 2 (Alnaes), and Nightingale (Tchaikovsky).
- D.968 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Evelyn Scotney (soprano): C'est l'histoire amoureuse from *Manon Lescaut* (Auber) and Pray you listen (Ophelia's ballad) from *Hamlet* (Thomas).
- E.373 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Isolde Menges (violin): Abendlied (Schumann-Joachim) and Allegro (Fiocco, arr. Bent and O'Neill).
- E.374 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Cedric Sharpe ('cello): Sarabande et Allemande (Senaillé, arr. Salmon).
- E.375 (10in., 3s.).—Carmen Hill (mezzo-soprano): Wait (d'Hardelot) and She dwelt among the untrodden ways (L. Kollié).
- D.B.743 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Hislop (tenor) and Dinh Gilly (baritone): Amore o grillo and, with William Parnis (bass), Dovunque al mondo, from *Madama Butterfly* (Puccini).
- D.967 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Radford (bass) and Peter Dawson (bass-baritone): The Lord is a Man of War from *Israel in Egypt* (Handel) and Sound, sound the trumpet from *I Puritani* (Bellini).

No such beautiful piano record as Paderewski's, in its own kind, has been issued for a long while. His previous records cannot be accounted successful in point of tone, and this one, though much better in that respect, is still a little banjo-like. What enraptures one is the noble mind of the artist illuminating Chopin's music in such a way as to make us feel we have never really heard the mazurkas before. The lovely touch, the gradations of tone, the rubatos, the whole make-up of the great player, are here faithfully reproduced. In the first mazurka in A flat you must notice the fine control of the keyboard when the melody passes to the bass, the way an exquisite modulation followed by a rippling coda is managed near the end of the piece. The F sharp minor mazurka is well known. It is the more vigorous of the two and has a most interesting coda of some length introduced with much piquancy just when the music would seem to have ended. The piano tone is better on this side, or is it that one's ears have become accustomed by the time one reaches it?

Congratulations to Miss Mary Lewis on going red! I never suspected from her performance in *Hugh the Drover*, excellent as



it was, that she would so soon receive the red label! Certainly she deserves it. Her voice proves to be of surprising range and purity. How easily she sails up to that top *Din Te souvient-il* (Farrar, in her record of the aria, shirked it); the lower register has warmth, but the singer shows a slight tendency to force there. The recording is very good indeed; the solo violin, playing the *Meditation*, being well balanced with the voice and the accompaniments on both sides of the right intensity. The first song represents the famous courtesan before her mirror, surrounded by strange gods, anxious for a re-assurance that she is beautiful, fearful of the passage of time. In the second (*Te souvient-il*) she has been converted to Christianity and is dying in the Convent of the White Nuns in the desert. The singer lacks a little the caressing quality Edvina used to get in *Ah, je suis seule*, but her pure tone is exactly suited to Thais' metamorphosis.

McCormack continues his exposition of *Lieder* with two beautiful examples of Brahms. His phrasing and diction are excellent, his style smoothness itself, but the result is not entirely satisfying. Perhaps his voice is a shade too luscious for this medium. Anyhow, it is splendid to have the songs so well sung; indeed, to have them at all. His sweet—that seems exactly the word—upper register is turned to good account at the end of *Waldeinsamkeit* with the repetition of “*ferne*”—an echo-like effect. The emotional contrast between the songs—love returned and love unrequited—makes them a suitable pair.

Chaliapine sings, first of all, the death song of a mariner (English translations in the supplement). The piece has the style of a folk-song, each verse going to the same tune. One is not conscious of any monotony however, so varied is the treatment the singer accords it. No one but he can so blend declamation and lyricism. Tchaikovsky's *Nightingale* is a rather depressing fowl. The lack of continuity in the phrases makes it a little wearisome, but it provides an effective vehicle for the singer. Excellent recording.

A first-rate record of the scene from the beginning of the first act of *Butterfly* comes next. It is particularly delightful to hear Dinh Gilly's fine restrained tones as Sharpless, and Hislop is well in the picture. The most audible words are naturally “America for ever” and “milk punch or whiskie.” (This latter phrase was the only one to interest a friend of mine who attended the opera under protest!) *Dunque al mondo* should be played first. Why is the sequence reversed in the supplement?

It is Pinkerton's exposition of American and nautical morality. The Consul warns the irresponsible youngster that *Butterfly* may not appreciate such treatment. The music ends just when she is due to appear. William Parnis sings Goro's few phrases as to the manner born.

I am sorry Miss Scotney has chosen such poor material for her H.M.V. debut. Auber's *Laughing Song* is innocuous enough, but Galli-Curci's singing of it is not likely to be surpassed, and it does not bear repetition. Anything more futile than Thomas's idea of Ophelia's madness it is hard to imagine. He trots out all the familiar old clichés. Poor Shakespeare, mangled by Gounod, annihilated by Thomas! Miss Scotney sings well and cleanly. I hope she will do something worth while next time. *The Queen of the Night* music is waiting for a brave coloratura soprano.

Isolde Menges plays, with exemplary clarity, a spirited piece of eighteenth century music which has a strong family resemblance to much of its period; it is none the less delightful for that. The reverse is an arrangement of a poetic little piano piece of Schumann. Miss Menges adapts herself perfectly to the change of style and mood. A desirable record.

Jean Baptiste Senaillé played and taught the violin in the court of Louis XV. of France. He was a pupil of the Vitali of the *Chaconne*. The *Sarabande* flows on in the most soothing way; there seems no reason why it should ever stop. When it does the brisk *Allemande* makes excellent contrast. Cedric Sharpe produces very pleasant tone.

Should not L. Kollie be Lawrence Kellie? Not that it greatly matters. The beautiful words are over-sentimentalised, but the complete impression is quite pleasing. *Wait* will have its advocates. I am not one of them.

What a tonic Handel is after these ballad writers. The two fine voices are well suited to each other. The lyrical Dawson tempers the robust Radford and a necessary contrast of vocal colour is secured.

Early Verdi might have signed his name to the Bellini extract. It may raise a smile, but such ingenuous music is rather delightful. Good recording. N. P.

## HIS MASTER'S VOICE

(April Issues.)

- D.B.815, 816, 817, 818 (12in., 34s.).—Fritz Kreisler (violin) and orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald: **Concerto in D, No. 4** (Mozart).
- D.969, 970, 971 (12in., 19s. 6d.).—Benno Moiseiwitch (piano) and the R.A.H. Orchestra, conducted by Sir Landon Ronald: **Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 25** (Mendelssohn).
- D.A.676 (10in., 6s.).—Frieda Hempel (soprano): **Alleluia** (arr. G. O'Connor Morris) and **Oh, had I Jubal's lyre** from Joshua (Handel).
- D.A.573 (10in., 6s.).—Michele Fleta (tenor): **Mi tierra** (Muzas—Mediavalla) and **Adios Triquetra** (Robles).
- D.B.691 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Chaliapine (bass): **The moon is high in the sky** (Rachmaninoff) and **Crazy-headed John** (Russian folk-song).
- D.B.693 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Dinh Gilly (baritone): **Fleurissait une rose** (*Legende de la Sauge*) from *Le Jongleur de Notre Dame* (Massenet).
- D.972 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Tudor Davies (tenor): **Lord vouchsafe Thy loving kindness** (*Cujus animam, Stabat Mater*) (Rossini) and **Sound an alarm** (*Judas Maccabeus*) (Handel).
- D.973 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Leila Megane (contralto): (a) **Invocation to the Nile, No. 1**; (b) **Lament of Isis, No. 5** (*Songs of Egypt*) (G. Bantock) and **Amour viens aider** (*Samson et Dalila*) (Saint-Saëns).
- E.376 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—De Reske Singers (male quartet): **The winter is gone** and **Bushes and Briers** (arr. R. Vaughan Williams).
- B.1966 (10in., 3s.).—Band of H.M. Coldstream Guards, conducted by Lieut. R. G. Evans: **King's Guards' March** (Keith) and **Third Battalion March** (Egerton).
- C.1182 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—De Groot and the Piccadilly Orchestra: **Bajadere Selection, Parts 1 and 2** (E. Kalman).

The H.M.V. records have arrived rather late for review this month, and I am compelled to trust to rather hastily-formed impressions. I trust my readers will bear this in mind if and when they disagree with me. There is, by the way, on the list the title of a record by Chaliapine that looks interesting; but the record has not come so I shall have to leave it over till next month.

The two outstanding items are Mozart's *Violin Concerto in D*, recorded (complete) by Kreisler, and Mendelssohn's *Piano Concerto in G minor* (also complete), by Moiseiwitch. Lack of time makes it impossible for me to make an analysis of these works, but happily the omission is of little consequence since the construction of both is adequately summarised in the company's bulletin. The Kreisler records are a great acquisition. There are few who will dispute the powers of this great violinist, who is also a great thinker, and our only regret has been that hitherto he has given us on the gramophone nothing but “snippets.” Now, however, we have something by which we can to some extent measure his greatness. I can only say that the rendering fully realised the high hopes with which I approached the records. Better playing I do not expect to hear, and the orchestra, too, rises to the occasion. I still feel uncomfortable, though, about those *cadenzas*. Mozart meant them to be there, of course, but Mozart did not foresee the gramophone. Those that Kreisler plays are, I imagine, his own (I have not had a chance to verify this) and are very good; no doubt I should be perfectly happy if I was listening to the work in the concert hall. But on the gramophone I cannot help feeling that these things are troublesome interpolations interrupting the flow of the composer's thought. I wonder what my readers think about it? There can, however, be no two opinions about the excellence of the music, the playing, and the recording of the concerto, which I can confidently recommend to all.

Mendelssohn's *G minor Concerto* is an early work written in 1831, when the author of it was only twenty! Judged as such it is a remarkable achievement, but I do not think it can be classed among the very best of Mendelssohn's compositions. It seems to lack any very deep significance, and a good deal of it flows along



rather too easily. Still, it is undoubtedly the work of a master craftsman and almost universally popular. Moiseiwitch plays it brilliantly. The recording, too, is excellent, and once more we find the piano sounding much better in combination with the orchestra than it does when it stands alone. Someone referred to this curious fact the other day (was it in THE GRAMOPHONE ?); I wish I could understand why it happens. This record again is one that I can recommend.

**Frieda Hempel.**—Frieda Hempel's singing of *Oh, had I Jubal's lyre* is first-rate. The song is in Handel's more florid manner, but the impulse of the rhythm is tremendous. I did not like her so much in *Alleluia*, though it is something to get this grand old tune at all. In the first place, I do not feel that any single singer can do justice to a piece of this kind; it demands a large chorus. Secondly, no one who has heard Holst's version of it (referred to in the bulletin) can fail to make a comparison detrimental to the present arrangement. Lastly, the singer makes the great mistake of taking liberties with the rhythm to obtain "effects." This is unpardonable in such a hymn as this and, incidentally, serves to emphasise the fact that she is inclined to drag. The recording of both voice and orchestra is excellent.

**Fleta.**—Fleta is not a singer I am fond of, and after hearing the two *jotas* he recorded a little while ago I approached my instrument with some trepidation. However, I was agreeably surprised. The voice is one with great possibilities, though its quality is not always pleasing, and certain passages showed that its owner possesses considerable power of varying his tone-colour. If only he could get over the tendency to bawl on his high notes there is no saying what he might do. But, though he shows some signs of grace this month, I cannot yet say that I like him. The music is pleasant without being very interesting.

**Dinh Gilly.**—Before hearing this record I advise everyone to read the little article on it in the bulletin. It is essential to know what the song is about. The music is not great, and it is almost childishly simple. But so, too, is the story. The singing is admirably restrained and thoroughly suited to the song. Admirers of Dinh Gilly should get the record, as it shows him dealing with music rather different from that which he usually chooses.

**Tudor Davies.**—In selecting these songs by Handel and Rossini, Tudor Davies has submitted himself to a severe test. Handel's phrases seem simple, but this appearance is deceptive, and it is only a very fine singer who can so interpret them that their full value transpires. With Rossini, on the other hand, the problem is one of sheer vocalisation. On the whole Tudor Davies comes through the ordeal with success. The Handel song is convincing in spite of a slight forcing of the tone here and there, and the difficulties of the Rossini are overcome more successfully than the singer's enemies would expect. There is a fearsome passage at the end of the *Cujus animam*. I forget in what key the number is written, but on my instrument (with a speed of seventy-eight) the high note comes out as D in *alt*. In any case, the phrase is enough to frighten the boldest, and it is greatly to Tudor Davies' credit that he approaches it undismayed and leaves it without disaster. He has not entirely overcome the faults of his production, but they are distinctly less noticeable than they used to be.

**Leila Megane.**—I am inclined to regard Leila Megane's songs as among the best on the list, and in this I am influenced largely by the excellent recording of the orchestral part, which plays so important a rôle in all the three items. But I do not wish to disparage the singing which is fully competent throughout. *Amour viens aider* is a thoroughly good piece of work from every point of view; the music fails to take wings, but it covers the ground notwithstanding. Bantock's two songs are probably familiar to many. They owe much to their rich colouring, but beneath the embroidery one seems to detect the authentic note of emotion truly felt and worthily expressed.

**De Reszke Singers.**—Nothing could be more charming than these two tunes, which represent English folk-song at its best. Readers of the late Mr. Cecil Sharp's book, "English Folk-song: Some Conclusions," will remember that *Bushes and Briers* was among his favourites. Both songs have been cleverly and suitably arranged by Dr. Vaughan-Williams, and the singing is adequate if not brilliant. I wish I could have heard the words more easily at times.

**The Coldstream Guards' Band.**—These two items are military music pure and simple, with no pretensions to unsoldierly sophistication. Judged as such I should think they were distinctly good—

there is all the necessary rhythmic vitality—but perhaps the band expert will presently deliver a more authoritative judgment.

**De Groot.**—One generally knows the sort of thing to expect from De Groot: a sensitive if somewhat exaggerated interpretation of light music belonging usually to the more languorous type. He procures a supply of this that is apparently inexhaustible. The present selection is a typical example. Neither the music nor the rendering will bear thinking about much (though playing and recording are both good), but the record is just the thing to put on when one is feeling tired.

## VOCALION.

(March Issues.)

- A.0229 (12in., 5s. 6d.).—**John Coates** (tenor): *Speak, music* (Elgar) and *Since first I saw your face* (Thomas Ford, 1607). Piano, Berkeley Mason.
- X.9528 (10in., 3s.).—**Olga Haley** (mezzo-soprano): *Die Forelle* (Schubert) and *Après un Rêve* (Fauré). Piano, Ivor Newton.
- K.05152 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Lenghi-Cellini** (tenor): *Salve, dimora* from *Faust* (Gounod) and *Il sogno* from *Manon* (Massenet).
- A.0227 (12in., 5s. 6d.).—**John Charles Thomas** (baritone): *Nocturne* (Curran) and *The heart bow'd down* from *The Bohemian Girl* (Balfe).
- K.05147 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Horace Stevens** (bass-baritone): *Thou'rt passing hence* (Sullivan) and *The Windmill* (Nelson).
- X.9538 (10in., 3s.).—**Ethel Hook** (contralto): *Longin' for you* (Fisher) and *In the Chimney Corner* (F. H. Cowen).
- X.9529 (10in., 3s.).—**Howard Bliss** ('cello): *Sonata in G major, Third Movement, Vivace* (Sammartini-Salmon) and *L'Agréable, Rondeau* (Marais).
- B.3116 (10in., 4s.).—**Sapelnikoff** (piano): *L'Alonette* (Glinka-Balakirev) and *Polka-Miniature, Op. 6, No. 2* (Sapelnikoff).

The outstanding feature of this month's Vocalion list is the issue of two major works, the *Italian Symphony* of Mendelssohn, and the "Nigger" *Quartet* of Dvorák. These are both noticed elsewhere. Putting them aside we have a somewhat mixed bag. There are two instrumental records which I liked very much and a rather uneven set of vocal records. I may say at once, however, that throughout the series there is a noticeable absence of scratch, and that the surface noise is never so great as to interfere with one's enjoyment of the music. The reproduction, too, is on a consistently high level.

**John Coates.**—When John Coates is at his best his singing is such a marvel of artistry that one can only judge him by the highest standards. Measured by these the two songs here recorded fall, I think, a little (only a little) short. There is just a suggestion of imperfect control once or twice and the words occasionally lack the perfect clearness that we expect from the singer. But this is not to deny that the record is a delightful one, far superior to the work of any but the greatest artists. The piano part, too, comes out unusually well. The two songs seem curiously similar in style when one remembers that one is three centuries younger than the other. Elgar is perhaps a little more sentimental than Ford, but both composers command that flow of rich melody which has always characterised the best English songs.

**Olga Haley.**—Here again is an interesting record, even if it fails to be quite all it might be. I think Olga Haley finds it easier to enter into the spirit of Schubert than into that of Fauré. At all events, her rendering of the delightful *Die Forelle* leaves little to be desired. If it is a trifle deliberate, that is a fault on the right side. *Après un rêve* is a song that depends chiefly on the perfect poise of the vocal line. The singer here thinks it necessary to treat the rhythm rather freely in order to get the effects she wants and achieve the climax. But these things are ever so much more satisfactory if left to speak for themselves.

**Lenghi-Cellini.**—This singer has a mellow tenor voice, the charm of which is notably increased by the ease of the production. Both



songs are, indeed, finely sung. I regretted—perhaps unreasonably—the original French, but after all Massenet's *Manon* is an adaptation of a book, while *Faust* is a translation of just a few scenes selected from Goethe's masterpiece—and Goethe wrote in German! So perhaps my phrase "original French" itself stands in need of some qualification. Both are old single-sided records re-issued.

**John Charles Thomas.**—The *Nocturne* that Thomas sings belongs to the ballad class and needs no comment, though it is good of its kind. Personally I much preferred the number from *The Bohemian Girl*, though it is a bit too long. Thomas is an adequate if not very inspiring singer. His intonation might be improved in places.

**Horace Stevens.**—Horace Stevens has a rich bass very satisfying to listen to in spite of some occasional roughness. It is a pity he cannot find something better worth singing than these two songs. They might be all right at a smoking concert, but in cold blood on the gramophone they leave me singularly unmoved, and the clumsiness of the playing (or is it the orchestration?) does not help matters. It is curious how often Sullivan was content to write below his best.

**Ethel Hook.**—Ethel Hook's contralto is of good quality, though her words are not always very clear. She sings a couple of ballads quite pleasingly.

**Howard Bliss.**—I have seldom enjoyed a 'cello record more than this one by Howard Bliss. The music itself consists of two attractive and melodious trifles such as the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries turned out in dozens. But these things are seldom played with such perfect sympathy, such clean phrasing, and above all such a keen feeling for rhythm as we get here. I hear that Howard Bliss (who is, I believe, a near relative of Arthur Bliss, the composer) plays on a "Strad," and that may partly account for the roundness of his tone. But the credit for a first-rate interpretation belongs entirely to him and his nameless co-adjutor at the piano.

**Sapellnikoff.**—I was equally delighted with Sapellnikoff. One cannot always dwell on the heights of Olympus, and the groves of Arcadia are a refreshing change at times. It is hither that Sapellnikoff takes us in two dainty numbers, and here that he disports himself for our delectation with a skill and grace that put the nymphs to shame. I have never heard a piano record in which the characteristic tone of the instrument is more faithfully reproduced. To me the piano has always seemed the least satisfactory of instruments on the gramophone, but a few more records like this might induce me to change my mind.

P. P.

## DANCE NOTES

By Richard Herbert

IT is with a feeling somewhat akin to repentance that I prepare to write my notes this month. Yes... I suspect that I was a little precipitate in my judgment and in my complaints; for hardly were the last words of my article dry on the paper before I received a batch of records which gave good cause for rejoicing. Yet does the presence of a few good ones among the ever-increasing number of new records which are issued every month entirely allay our doubts and forebodings? Rather the reverse—these few gems so far outshine the general mass of mediocrity that we only become more conscious of the bad through making the comparison. I am not wholly gloomy, for that would be impossible after the success of the third concert at the Queen's Hall. But here again we are dealing with exceptions, and even here it is not possible to acquit entirely the Savoy bands of some of the prevalent vices—muted trumpets and squawking saxophones. The plight of syncopated music seems to be similar to that into which the cinema has fallen, and from which wise men are making bold attempts to rescue broadcasting. I myself am convinced that the prevailing tendency of all those wealthy powers, which attempt to keep the public amused, is to under-estimate, minimise, and repress the intelligence and good taste of those for whom they cater. When jazz music first became the vogue just less than ten years ago, people were bowled over by its novelty, and held captive by an appeal which it possessed, but which at first they did not stop to question. It was primitive music, if it could be called music at all; it had a primitive appeal; and it came from a primitive people. It was always sensuous, and sometimes sensual.

Its best quality was its rhythm; and it is for its rhythm that it has been persevered with, developed, modernised, and improved. No one has complained that the change which has taken place has been for the bad, because no one has been fool enough to suppose that jazz music was perfect when it was first imported. We all know that the changes which have taken place in the intervening years are so great as to demand a new name for one branch of its development. We call it symphonised syncopation. So far so good, but here comes the parting of the ways. Most of the American bands—the Marek Weber Dance Orchestra being a notable exception—and several English bands too, seem reluctant to follow where others have been so competent to lead. These adhere to the old noisy and unmelodic style and suffer in consequence when judged musically. Surely there is no one who is not anxious that syncopated music should ultimately be judged by the highest standards and canons of music? It is refreshing and hopeful to find that such bands as the Marek Weber Dance Orchestra mentioned above, a company of musicians whom we should call "serious" for want of a better word, should play syncopated music; and it is equally satisfying to know that their records are very greatly appreciated. Let us, by all means, have rhythmical and sonorous accompaniment, especially for our ballroom dancing, but oh, let us have the melody as well!

I have dwelt on this matter somewhat at length because I believe it is one of greatest interest to all ballroom dancers. Speaking for myself, I think there is nothing which is so likely to destroy my own enjoyment of dancing, as monotony or hideous and continuous discord in the music—not even to dance with those partners who consider themselves the best dancers in the world and are—well, just not. And I am no exception.

This has been a criticism of the bands, for it is undeniable that responsibility for this particular state of affairs rests with them, and I refer anyone who wishes to dispute this statement to the three totally different renderings of *Peter Pan* which have been issued this month. Having no wish to dictate, even were I able to do so, I just say, consider; for I believe that consideration of the matter would make it quite plain that there is a desire for better music; and an indication that dance bands are anxious to play their pieces with the greatest musical effect and not only with the greatest noise or the greatest novelty, might induce "serious" composers to make attempts in the new medium. Syncopation has met with too much unfair criticism merely on account of its popularity. This is mere snobbishness which bids fair to disappear under the good influence of the recent concerts arranged for the Savoy bands and the Boston Orchestra at the Queen's Hall.

For the interest of those who are statistically minded, I give the following figures of records which I have played over since writing my notes last month. These totals include the Parlophone and Columbia records which I listed before going to press in March, but it should be remembered that THE GRAMOPHONE has not received all the new issues of those companies which have sent some records for review, and some companies still refrain from sending any at all. Nevertheless, the figures have an interest as indicating changes in popular favour, for the good old law of supply and demand has not yet been repealed, and they point out the queer whims and caprices which beset mankind even in his dances. A graph showing the rise and fall of the blues would be interesting to see. Of fox-trots there have been eighty-nine "sides," waltzes eighteen, one-steps six, and tangos three. At long last the tango had made a reappearance; two of the three tunes are supplied by The Columbia Company: *El Estandarte*, played by the Manuel Pizarro Orchestra of Paris, on one side, a typical Parisian tango, palpitating but serene, on the other, *La Gringuita*, played by the Tano Genaro Orchestra, also of Paris. The melody is played very beautifully by the violin, with delightful pizzicato, and the whole effect is one of majesty and moment (3582, 10in., 3s.). The only other tango is on one side of Vocalion, X.9532, 10in., 3s., *Pelota*, played by the London Band. It is a good tune, although hardly a typical tango, played a little fast, but with plenty of verve. One cannot help wondering when The Gramophone Company is going to issue in England some of the wonderful Spanish tangos which continue to appear at Barcelona. Surely they would be welcome, and what is delightful to think of, we should then be able to choose our favourite style. The two twelve-inch waltz records which The Columbia Company issued last month are first-rate value for the money (4s. 6d.). *Dream Waltz* and *Morgenblätter Waltz*, played by The Geiger Orchestra (9027), both very tuneful (although possibly a very tiny bit monotonous) should satisfy the most fastidious waltzers of the old school, while *Magic Waltz* from *The Last Waltz* and *Someday you'll care for me*, Savoy Havana Band



(9028), will particularly please the modernist, as would almost any waltz played by the same band. They are, indeed, almost incomparable. This month they give us in addition to those mentioned already, *The Golden West* (Columbia 3580, 10in., 3s.), quite a gem of playing, although a tune which has already become a favourite by familiarity. On the reverse of this record is *Back where the Daffodils grow* (fox-trot), played by the same band at its very best. They have also played three waltzes for The Gramophone Company (H.M.V. B.1965, 10in., 3s.), *The Dollar Princess*, none the worse for being an old friend, and *Sometime*, a very modern waltz, in queer contrast to the latter, with an occasional hesitation and a kind of semi-hesitation—altogether very good fun. Then there is *Poem* (H.M.V. B.1970, 10in., 3s.). Am I wrong in supposing this something really new at last? At any rate, it is a tune with plenty of rhythm in the accompaniment to a very sweet melody in which violin and 'cello play a principal part. The reverse of this disc is filled by *Alabamy bound* (fox-trot), a new tune, fast and rhythmical, in playing which the Savoy Orpheans have succeeded in inventing even new noises for the saxophone. For those who like vocal accompaniment in a waltz there is *Georgia Lullaby*, played by the Gleneagles Hotel Dance Band (Columbia 3588, 10in. 3s.). The Parlophone Company also issues this tune played by The Yellow Jackets, slowly but with plenty of rhythm. On the other side is *My Dream Girl*, a romantic waltz for the real enthusiast (E.5328, 10in., 2s. 6d.).—The Ferrera-Franchini Quartet of Hawaiian Guitars with violin and cornet give us two new tunes, played with their usual fascination: *Hawaiian Memories* and *Ukulele Lou* (Voc. X.9530, 10in., 3s.). These Hawaiian melodies possess a perennial fascination; they are intimate and quiet and carry one right away, perhaps, let us hope, with a charming partner. *All Alone* is still being recorded (Regal, G.8516, 10in., 2s.)—this time by The Corona Dance Orchestra—as is *In Shadowland* (Voc. X.9536, 10in., 3s.), played by the Carlton Hotel Dance Orchestra. There remains one more waltz for particular mention, *It's a man ev'ry time, it's a man* (Columbia 3587, 10in., 3s.), played by the Gleneagles Hotel Dance Band, which proves that the waltz can be a delightful dance without being romantic every time. *Mad 'cause you treat me this way* (fox-trot) is on the reverse side, played with very pronounced rhythm in medium time.

The one-steps are rather a poor lot, although there are many fox-trots nowadays which are played so fast as to be almost indistinguishable from them. Regal G.8325 has a one-step on both sides—*Savoy Scottish Medley* and *Savoy American Medley*—both played by the Corona Dance Orchestra. Be danced off your feet and sentimental at the same time if you can! One of the best of the new one-steps is *Tout l'monde fait ça* (Imperial 1394, 10in., 2s.). *Ce n'est pas la même chose quand on est deux* (fox-trot) on the other side has a delightful trumpet solo, not muted. Another medley, this time *Irish Medley*, comes from The Vocalion Company (Voc. X.9533, 10in., 3s.). It is indisputably a good medley, but are medleys really so popular as the issuing companies seem to suppose? Personally I long for a really original one-step if I am to take part in that dance at all. *Rosalie que desirez vous?* (Columbia 3583, 10in., 3s.) comes nearest to filling the bill, but it tails off a little towards the end after a promising start. This is played by The Philippe Pares Orchestra of Paris which also contributes *Fleurs d'Amour* (fox-trot) on the other side. The melody is delightful to follow, and the record is worth buying for this tune alone. It still remains to mention what is perhaps the best new medley—*Stars and Stripes Medley*—played by the Savoy Orpheans (H.M.V. B.1972, 10in., 3s.). In *That's what I'll do* on the reverse side we have an apt reply by our old friend, not a waltz, but a sentimental fox-trot. Among the large number of fox-trots which remain to be chosen from one would have expected to find at least a baker's dozen to enthuse about. But are there as many as that? Let's have a look at the best. The two twelve-inch Parlophones which were listed last month are played, perhaps, with the greatest individuality (Marek Weber Orchestra), although one or two of the tunes long ago became familiar. *Chansonette* and *Give me the night-time* (E.10249, 4s. 6d.) and *Rozsiska* and *The Ladies of Prague* (E.10250, 4s. 6d.). But the palm this month goes, I think, to *Nola*, played by the Boston Orchestra, *Mamma's gone* being on the other side (H.M.V. B.1964, 10in., 3s.). *Nola* is a gay tune with one of the best piano parts since *Kitten on the keys*; there are, too, delightful arpeggios on the saxophone. It is a tune which will especially delight the experts because there is plenty of room for individual interpretation. *Peter Pan* is causing a good deal of attention just at present. The record, made by Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra, is specially notable for the really good vocal accompaniment; it is, in fact, the only record worth mentioning on this score (Aco, G.15626, 10in., 2s. 6d.);

the Vocalion rendering is also good, but very different (X.9534, 10in., 3s.); for the rest the Savoy Orpheans, is easily the best (H.M.V. B.1963, 10in., 3s.). *Indian Town*, which is on the reverse side of this record, is also very good indeed; it has beautiful melody, an intriguing saxophone opening, perfect orchestration, and a fine rhythmical accompaniment. The only adverse criticism which one could possibly make is that there is a little too much muted trumpet. I was disappointed to find no new Paul Whiteman record this month and no new record by the Continental Dance Orchestra (Imperial), which pleased me so much last month. Let us hope we shall be amply rewarded in April.

The following list consists of other good fox-trots, starred according to their relative merits, which are too many to mention individually, or have failed to attract particular attention for novelty or originality.

#### PARLOPHONE (10in., 2s. 6d.).

E.5327.—\*\**Gotta getta girl* and *Go 'long mule* (The Goopus Five).

E.5323.—\**Doo wacku doo* (Parlophone Syncopaters) and \*\**Prince of Wails* (Frankie Quartell and his Melody Boys).

E.5324.—\**Follow the Swallow* (Ace Brigode and his Fourteen Virginians) and \**I don't know why* (Harry Oxley and his Post Lodge Orchestra).

E.5322.—\**Jealous* and \**The Hoodoo Man* (Eddie Elkins and his Orchestra).

E.5325.—\**Where's my Sweetie hiding?* and *Let me be the first to kiss you good morning*.

#### H.M.V. (10in., 3s.).

B.1946.—\**Heart-broken Rose* and \*\**When she's in red* (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).

B.1974.—\**I'll take her back if she wants to come back* and \**Sweet little you* (Jack Hylton).

B.1975.—\**Oh! How I love my darling* (Savoy Havana Band) and \*\**Me Neenyah* (Savoy Orpheans).

B.1973.—\**Where's my Sweetie hiding?* and \**Me and my boy friend* (Savoy Orpheans).

#### VOCALION (10in., 3s.).

X.9535.—\**I don't want to get married* and *Lonely and blue* (Carlton Hotel Dance Orchestra).

X.9537.—\**That haunting melody* (waltz, Ben Selvin and his Orchestra) and *Gotta getta girl* (The Ambassadors).

#### COLUMBIA (10in., 3s.).

3581.—\**Go 'long mule* and \*\**She loves me* (Savoy Havana Band).

3586.—\**Dear one* and \**Adoring you* (Gleneagles Hotel Dance Band).

3572.—\**Eat more fruit* and *I'll take her back if she wants to come back* (Hannan Dance Band).

3578.—\**I'm wonderful* and *Specially for you* (New Prince's Toronto Band).

#### REGAL (10in., 2s.).

G.8315.—\*\**In between the showers* and \*\**Sahara* (Corona Dance Orchestra).

G.8329.—\**Eat more fruit* and \**Girl shy* (Corona Dance Orchestra).

#### BRUNSWICK (10in., 3s.).

2682.—\**I wonder what's become of Sally?* and \**Susquehanna Home* (Bennie Krueger's Orchestra).

2663.—\**Scissor-Grinder Joe* and \**Wond'ring blues* (Gene Rodemich's Orchestra).

2641.—\**Ray and his little Chevrolet* (Bennie Krueger's Orchestra) and *Forsaken Blues* (Gene Rodemich's Orchestra).

#### IMPERIAL (10in., 2s.).

1395.—\**Mandalay* (Hollywood Dance Orchestra) and \*\**Driftwood* (The Lucky Strike Orchestra).

1397.—\*\**Queen's Doll House* and *I'm looking for the merry sunshine* (Greening's Dance Orchestra).

1399.—\**I loved—I lost* and \*\**Just like a beautiful story* (Greening's Dance Orchestra).

#### ACO (10in., 2s. 6d.).

G.15623.—\**Dear one* (Ohio Novelty Band) and \*\**Zaza* (President Orchestra).

G.15624.—\*\**Titina* (President Orchestra) and *Nightingale Waltz* (Cleveland Society Orchestra).

The new Parlophone and Columbia records arrive just as THE GRAMOPHONE is going to press. I foresee great popularity for two tunes, *Tea for Two* and *I want to be Happy*, from "No, No, Nanette" (Parlo E.5348, E.5349; Columbia 3592 and Zono 2548).  
R. H.



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- 1405** { **Eat More Fruit** (Rule & Stogden). Comedy Song.  
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**Girl Shy** (H. Rule). Comedy Song.  
Sung by Geo. Berry, accompanied by the Imperial Trio.
- 1404** { **I've Got a Feeling for Ophelia** (Dixon & Henri). Song.  
Sung by Lionel Rothery, with Orchestral Accomp.  
**Oh! Auntie** (Bryant & David). Comedy Song.  
Sung by Lionel Rothery, with Orchestral Accomp.
- 1403** { **Where's My Sweetie Hiding?** (Little & Finch). Song.  
Sung by Lionel Rothery, with Orchestral Accomp.  
**Let Me be the First to Kiss You Good Morning** (Bernard & Robinson). Song.  
Sung by Eric Laurence, with Orchestral Accomp.
- 1402** { **A New Kind of Man** (Layton & Johnson's success) (Clare & Flatow). Comedy Song.  
Sung by Geo. Berry, with Orchestral Accomp.  
**Wait a bit Susie** (from "Primrose" (G. Gershwin). Song.  
Sung by Eric Laurence, with Orchestral Accomp.

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- 1401** { **Ciribiribin**. Hawaiian Guitars. Played by Ferera & Franchini.  
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- 1400** { **Melodié** (Gluck-Kreisler). Violin Solo. Played by M. Addash, the famous Boy Violinist (Gold Medallist of the Warsaw Conservatoire).  
**Menuett** (Mozart). Violin Solo. Played by M. Addash, the famous Boy Violinist (Gold Medallist of the Warsaw Conservatoire).

### Dances

- 1399** { **I Loved—I Lost** (Mayerl & Paul). Fox Trot. Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.  
**Just Like a Beautiful Story** (Earl Bartnett). Fox Trot. Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.
- 1398** { **Eat More Fruit** (Rule & Stogden). Fox Trot. Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.  
**I Can't Help Loving that Girl** (Sonenscher & Burton). Fox Trot. Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.
- 1397** { **I'm Looking for the Merry Sunshine** (Dixon & Schmidt). Fox Trot. Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.  
**Queen's Doll House** (F. Chappelle). Fox Trot. Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.
- 1396** { **Oh! How I Love My Darling** (Leslie & Woods). Fox Trot. Played by the Bar Harbor Society Orchestra (Vocal Chorus: Arthur Hall).  
**Where is My Sweetie Hiding?** (Little & Finch). Fox Trot. Played by the Missouri Jazz Band.
- 1395** { **Driftwood** (Lew Gold). Fox Trot. Played by the Lucky Strike Orchestra.  
**Mandalay** (Burnett, Lyman & Arnheim). Fox Trot. Played by the Hollywood Dance Orchestra.
- 1394** { **Ce N'est Pas le Meme Chose Quand on est Deux** (Raoul Moretti). Fox Trot. Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.  
**Tout l'monde fait ça** (Paul Florendas). One Step. Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.

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# THE NEW-POOR PAGE

Half-Crown and Two-Shilling  
records good on both sides



ACO.—A very fine record by John Thorne, BARITONE, easily heads this list: *My Song is of the Sturdy North*. A TENOR record by Archie Hill comes next, *My Lovely Celia*. SOPRANO: Miss Thea Phillips, a real soprano with clean enunciation, sings *I Love the Moon*. VIOLIN AND PIANO: A vigorous and well-balanced record, *All Alone* (Waltz).

BELTONAS.—I like the ORCHESTRAL rendering of the *Dagger Dance* from *Matuma* (Herbert) the best of these. Peculiar music, with a magnificently recorded metronomic drum part. HARRY DRUMMOND, BARITONE, sings *Little Green Hat* in a charming way. PIANOFORTE: *A June Morning*. Largely in the treble of the scale. A number suitable for small machines is *Anitra's Dance* (Grieg). Well arranged for and nicely played upon two accordions. SCOTS SONGS: *Comin' Thro' the Rye*, Mezzo Soprano, and *My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose*, Tenor. FOXTROT: *Fair Weather Love*.

IMPERIAL.—VIOLIN AND PIANO: *Menuett*, Mozart. A good vigorous record. BARITONE: *The Land of Gra-ma-Chree*. DANCE: *The Queen's Dolls' House*.

PARLOPHONE.—EDITH LORAND ORCHESTRA: *Dead Roses*, waltz, is a perfect thing of its kind. BOHEMIAN ORCHESTRA: *Valse Espagnole*, *Frasquita*. Fully up to their high standard. Vincent Lopez, incomparable for JAZZ, plays *Me Neenyah* (Herbert Spencer) and *I Want to be Happy* from *No, No, Nanette*.

REGAL.—TENOR: *A Brown Bird Singing* is one of William Thomas's best. *Friend o' Mine*, thoroughly well sung by Kenneth Walters. JAZZ WALTZ: *All Alone*.

WINNER.—The SAXOPHONE solo, *Serenade*, *Les Millions d'Arlequin*, is really very beautiful. POPULAR SONG: Mr. Fred Granger's performance of *From One Till Two* is clean and distinct to a degree. ORCHESTRAL: *On Wings of Love*. Tango.

ZONO.—VIOLIN AND PIANO: *Swedish Melody*. POPULAR SONG: *Just Been Wondering*, sung by Browning Mummery. FOX-TROT: *Dot and Carrie*. All three of these are good.

The very best of the above I think are:—

*My Song is of the Sturdy North*, John Thorne (Aco).  
*Dagger Dance*, Orchestral (Beltona).  
*All Alone*, Violin and Piano (Aco).  
*A Brown Bird Singing*, Tenor (Regal).  
*Serenade*, Saxophone Solo (Winner).  
*Just Been Wondering*, Popular Song (Zono).  
*Dead Roses*, Orchestral (Parlo.).  
*Me Neenyah*, Jazz (Parlo.).

N.B.—I have purposely refrained from giving catalogue information because I wish readers to get the lists containing any numbers they fancy from their dealers, and then if they do not like the pair on the record I have mentioned they may be tempted to try another record of the same series.

Everyone should remember that machines having small horns (resonators) will not respond fully to the tone of instruments having large resonators or large resonating columns of air.

H. T. B.



## WORDS WANTED BY READERS

- (1) Handel's "In Penseroso."
- (2) Taubert's "Der Vogel im Walde," sung by Selma Kurz.  
—By W. T. Logeman, The Hill, Somerset West.
- (3) "Now your days of philandering" (Figaro) and
- (4) "The Creed" (Otello), as sung by Peter Dawson (H.M.V. C1041).
- (5) "Chi mi frena" (sextet from "Lucia di Lammermoor") and
- (6) "Un di se ben rammentomi" (quartet from "Rigoletto"), Italian and English words, or either (H.M.V. DQ 100).
- (7) "Oiseaux dans la Charmille" ("Tales of Hoffmann") and
- (8) "Où va la jeune Hindoue" ("Lakmé"), French and English or either, sung by Mabel Garrison (H.M.V. DB 501).  
—By C. R. Harmer, 3, Padderswick Road, Hammersmith, W.6.
- (9) "Wo find' ich Trost" (Wolf), McCormack, in English.  
—By Mrs. Carter, Iden, Sussex.
- (10) "Midnight Review" (Glinka).
- (11) "Song of the Viking Guest" (Korsakov).
- (12) "The Prophet" (Korsakov), in English.  
—By Maxwell and Sons, 59B, Clarence Street, Kingston-on-Thames.
- (13) "For You Alone"—Caruso on D.A. 108.  
—By A. S. Wade, 4, Kelvingrove St., Sandyford, Glasgow.
- (14) "Tristan" Love Duet as sung on H.M.V. D. 736,737.  
—By H. Reed, 9, Kingston Rd., Rowbarton, Taunton, Som.
- (15) "By Silent Hearth" and "Now Begin"—Walther's Trial Songs from The Mastersingers, as sung by Frank Mullings.
- (16) "Morning was Gleaming"—Prize Song from the same.  
—By A. M. Gordon-Brown, 15, Campden Grove, W.8.



## Miscellaneous Reviews

- H.M.V.**—B.1958 (10in., 3s.).—**Sydney Coltham** (tenor): *A Song of Quietness* (Haydn Wood) and *A Summer Afternoon* (Eric Coates).
- H.M.V.**—B.1957 (10in., 3s.).—**George Baker** (baritone): *In Summertime on Bredon* (Graham Peel) and *The Top of the Hill* (Harold Samuel).
- H.M.V.**—B.1946 (10in., 3s.).—**Peter Dawson** (bass-baritone): *Some crimson rose* and *Here's to the good old days* (A. V. Neighbour).
- H.M.V.**—B.1948 (10in., 3s.).—**De Groot and the Piccadilly Orchestra**: *Passione* (Ranzato) and *A Thing of Dreams* (Luna).
- H.M.V.**—B.1947 (10in., 3s.).—**Liam Walsh** (Irish bagpipes): *The Blackbird and Salamanca* (Irish reel).
- H.M.V.**—B.1949 (10in., 3s.).—**Jesse Crawford** (pipe organ): *Somewhere a voice is calling* (Tate) and *Serenade* (Schubert, arr. Crawford).
- H.M.V.**—C.1187 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Ben Lawes** (humorous): *Exits* (C. Grey). Two parts.
- VOCALION**.—X.9531 (10in., 3s.).—**Isabelle Patricola** (comedienne): *Doo wacka doo* and *Me and the boy friend*.
- ACO**.—F.33073 (12in., 4s.).—**Grosvenor Orchestra**: *Sylvia Dances* and *Cupid's Carnival*, Nos. 2 and 4 from *Sylvan Scenes* (Percy Fletcher).
- H.M.V.**—C.1189 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Mayfair Orchestra**: *Patricia Selection* and *The Dollar Princess Selection*.
- H.M.V.**—B.1962 (10in., 3s.).—**De Groot and the Piccadilly Orchestra**: *All Alone* and *In Shadowland*.
- COLUMBIA**.—3606 (10in., 3s.).—**Hawaiian Guitar, Banjo and Ukulele Trio**: *O Sole Mio* and *My Hawaii*.
- COLUMBIA**.—3601 (10in., 3s.).—**The Trix Sisters**: *The Georgia Weddin'* and *In Honeysuckle Time*.
- COLUMBIA**.—3603 (10in., 3s.).—**Cyril Newton** (baritone): *Eat more fruit* and *Oh, how I love my Darling*.
- COLUMBIA**.—3604 (10in., 3s.).—**Cyril Newton** (baritone): *Follow the Swallow* and *Doo-Wacka-Doo*.
- COLUMBIA**.—3593 (10in., 3s.).—**Layton and Johnstone** (American duettists): *Tea for two* and *I want to be happy* from No. No, Nanette.
- COLUMBIA**.—3562 (10in., 3s.).—**Tom Clare** (at the piano): *It isn't done* and *Hum a little tune*.

You buy records of songs and ballads either because you like the singer or the song or both; and Coltham, Baker, and Dawson must have many staunch followers. Of the March records, Coltham's is distinctly not one of his best, because both ballads betray the tremulous thinness of his high notes. George Baker, on the other hand, with his fine voice and splendid diction, has far better songs to sing, but spoils, to my ear, the lovely *Bredon* by a certain coarseness of approach; it is worthy of a noble pathos, as Gervase Elwes proved; and unexpectedly I turned the record with relief to hear Harold Samuel's jolly *Top of the Hill*. But Dawson, with poorer material, makes, as usual, more than the best out of it; a model of easeful mastery (though he is only on the edge of the high note in the second song).

De Groot is said to have discovered *Passione*, and is to be congratulated. I know nothing of his playing that I have liked so much since *Kasbek*. *The Thing of Dreams* is clear soup from a bottle.

The next four records are to be recommended highly if you happen to like their peculiarities. You can hardly like the thin finicky scramble of the Irish bagpipes and the treacly slither of the pipe organ and the rapid, distinct, rather jejune humours of Ben Lawes and the infectious vulgarity of Isabelle Patricola. But they are all good records in their own styles, and the last one has the two most popular tunes of the moment (excepting *Tea for two*) and the accompaniment of the Ambassadors is as devastating as the singer's voice—the epithet is now, of course, regarded as complimentary.

The Grosvenor Orchestra makes a brilliant record of Mr. Percy Fletcher's pretty music; not exactly a record that you *must* have, but one that you will be very glad to possess.

Needless to say, the Mayfair Orchestra is thoroughly competent in musical comedy selections, and De Groot gives two of the most popular tunes of the moment in his best style. For those who like—or rather who can still endure—the relentless scoop of Hawaiian music, *O sole mio* and *My Hawaii* make a good pair. The Trix sisters—is this their first record?—are rather given away by the uncompromising wax, which has resisted some of the charm of their performances; but *In Honeysuckle Time* is one of their most engaging songs. Cyril Newton's voice is too metallic for my taste, and I leave these two records without enthusiasm, but Tom Clare seems to me at his best in his two songs: easy, clear, and pleasantly humorous.

At last I am able to enjoy *Tea for two* and *I want to be happy* at my leisure—both charmingly sung with real restraint by Layton and Johnstone. The dance records of these tunes go to a colleague, worse luck; Columbia and Parlophone dead-heated in sending them, and have evidently been waiting on tiptoe for the release.

PEPPERING.

## BAND RECORDS

- ACO**.—G.15538 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—**Australian Newcastle Steel Works Band**: *Irresistible March* (Rimmer) and *Roll Away Bet March* (J. Ord Hume).
- ACO**.—G.15617 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—**Band of H.M. Welsh Guards**: *Coppelia Ballet*, No. 1, *Fanfare et marche de la Cloche*; No. 6, *Marche des Guerriers*; and No. 7, *Czardas* (Delibes).
- ACO**.—G.15618 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—**Band of H.M. Welsh Guards**: *The Wedding of the Rose* (Leon Jessel) and *Cinderella's Bridal Procession* (S. Dicker).
- H.M.V.**—B.1945 (10in., 3s.).—**Band of H.M. Royal Air Force**: *Folk Songs*, No. 1, *Seventeen come Sunday*, and No. 3, *Folk Songs from Somerset* (Vaughan Williams).
- REGAL**.—G.8314 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—**Regal Military Band**: *In the Cloisters* (Lee Torrance) and *In a Clock Store* (Orthe).
- VOC**.—K.05151 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Band of H.M. Life Guards**: *Scenes Napolitaines* (Massenet).

The playing of the Steel Works Band in the two marches is so fine that I think even Peppering will again concede his "grudging admiration," particularly for the virtuosity of the drummer and the lung power and nimbleness of fingers of the bass and euphonium players. The marches themselves are both built up on the commonly accepted lines and of the two I prefer the one by Mr. Rimmer. Throughout both sides the tone is very full and the recording is first-rate, although I believe I detected a suspicion of an echo in one or two places.

Both records by the Band of H.M. Welsh Guards are excellently played and recorded. *The Wedding of the Rose*, by the composer of the famous *Parade of the Tin Soldiers*, is perhaps the most attractive, being very tuneful. *Cinderella's Bridal Procession* is rather tedious, although Lieutenant Harris by means of exaggerated rallentandos and other tricks of the trade, gets the best out of what there is. The three movements from the *Coppelia Suite* are not as melodious as much of Delibes' music, but at any rate they have the advantage of not being as hackneyed as the *Entracte* and *Valse* and the *Mazurka* from the same suite.

Those who have not already got the attenuated version of Vaughan Williams' *Folk-song Suite* issued by the Vocalion Co. should certainly acquire the new record by the Royal Air Force Band. These two marches are really delightful and neither playing nor recording leaves anything to be desired. This is the best record this band have given us yet.

*In the Cloisters* is another of the numerous progeny for which *In a Monastery Garden* seems to be responsible. It bears a strong family resemblance, and is no better than any of the others and worse than most. I cannot distinguish even one of the words sung to one of the airs. They may be so poignant as to justify the really pathetic tremolo, though I doubt it. *In a Clock Store* is labelled descriptive. The winding up and chiming are easily distinguishable! Perhaps the rest represents the breaking of the spring and the clock running down.

The magnificent playing of the Life Guards Band is rather wasted on *Scenes Napolitaines*, which is sickly stuff at the best. I do not know what the various movements in the suite are supposed to depict, but I should imagine that No. 2 (the one commencing with three strokes on the glockenspiel) is the usual "Sunday morning." At any rate, this title would do very well.

W. A. C.



## CORRESPONDENCE

*De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum.*

[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, *The Gramophone*, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of the manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

## ELENA GERHARDT'S CONCERTS.

*(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)*

DEAR SIR,—Many readers of *THE GRAMOPHONE*, no doubt, were among the audience on February 3rd and 24th at Queen's Hall to hear Elena Gerhardt's two recitals—the first of Brahms and Schubert, the second of Hugo Wolf, Tchaikovsky and Wagner. To my mind—though I know that I shall not carry everybody with me—the contrast between the two concerts was remarkable. Fraülein Gerhardt sang magnificently at both; it was not in her performances that the contrast lay, but in the genius of the composers. The first concert was throughout a rare occasion. It began with a group of Brahms' songs, including the charming setting of the folk-song, *Vor dem Fenster*, the exquisite *O Nachtigall*, and the suave *Wie Melodien zieht es*; it continued with eight lovely songs by Schubert, among which I must particularly praise the tragic colour of Heine's *Die Stadt*, which was perfectly sung, *Das Fischer mädchen*, the jolly rhythm of *Abschied*, and that old favourite, *Leise flehen meine Lieder*; it ended ostensibly with another group of Brahms of which incomparably the greatest was *Immer leiser*, an intensely beautiful song of a quiet, sad, long drawn-out passion in which the singer surpassed herself; and it ended really with four encores, all of Brahms—namely, *Feldeinsamkeit*, *Vergebliches Ständchen*—both already recorded—*O Liebliche Wangen*, and *Von ewiger Liebe*. I clamour at once that *O Nachtigall*, *Die Stadt*, *Leise flehen*, and *Immer leiser* shall be recorded as soon as possible; and, of course, if I were a millionaire I would have all six hundred odd of Schubert's incomparable songs recorded by Gerhardt, for she sings them as nobody else, and if her tradition is lost, who will revive it?

And then in the second concert, there was only one rare moment; when after the incredible vulgarity of the last stanza of Wolf's *Der Freund*, Gerhardt came and gave Schumann's *Nussbaum* to absolute perfection. It was like the voice of a blackbird after a bad Salvation Army band. I could only ask myself how such a singer, with her powers of singing the very greatest in a manner that is a revelation even to those who know them well, could even want to sing the pretty banalities of Tchaikovsky, the Wagner at his weakest, and most of the Wolf songs of this particular programme. Mr. Ernest Newman thinks very highly of Wolf, and I bow to his greater knowledge; but I maintain, with all weapons, that with the possible exceptions of *Heimweh*, *Verborgenheit*, and *Weyla's Gesang*, all those sung by Gerhardt on February 24th are fundamentally inferior, a fact which is not really concealed by the clever accompaniments of *Das Ständchen* and *Die Zigeunerin*, and is accentuated by the commonplace piano part of *Fussreise*—so jolly beery and sauerkraut—and of *Auf dem grünen Balcon*—the sham Spanish touch now for ever dissipated by de Falla and Albéniz. And after all, does *Verborgenheit*—which was sung at special request—wear? I have a German record of Gerhardt singing this to an orchestral accompaniment, which Adrian Boult brought some years ago from Germany. The band was out of tune, but I played it many times, at first with rapture, and later with hatred. It is not the real thing, and there are plenty of real things to compare it with in Gerhardt's wonderful repertory. I daresay many of the songs that she sang at the second concert will be recorded, for she gets every drop of essence out of each one. The simple ditty, *Bescheidene Liebe*, for instance, about a girl who loved a dove, is very effective, and for tunefulness assisted by Gerhardt's wonderful command of voice-colour, Wolf's *Das Ständchen* and *Auf dem grünen Balcon* would record splendidly. But at best such things would be diversions. Diversions are all very well, but great voices do not last for ever. There is so much recording that cries to be done by Gerhardt, and already time is beginning to tell.

Yours faithfully,

ORLO WILLIAMS.

London, W. 8.

GALLI-CURCI AND HEMPEL.

*(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)*

SIR,—Your correspondent James Rainford seems to miss the point implicit in the very excellent and pertinent remarks of your critic "J," which is, as I take it, the unspeakable lack of taste that prompts prime donne to include in their programmes stuff such as *Dixie Land* and *Home Sweet Home* with their sentimental associations, which have no conceivable connection with it, alongside great music. One does not, I suppose, whether one belongs to the intelligentsia of music or is merely a member of a Royal Albert Hall Sunday afternoon audience, dispute the validity of the claim that "the people" shall have what they want, but one does emphatically dispute the propriety of serving up Bisque d'Écrevisse in the same menu with tripe and onions, following up a reading of a Ghâzel of Hafiz with one of Ella Wheeler Wilcox's Poems of Passion. If singers like the delicious Madame Hempel—who as an artist is in another world than that of the absurdly over-rated, extravagantly belauded, and essentially commonplace and dull singer, Galli-Curci—would realise that there are two audiences who want to hear her, one which wants to hear her in the great music of which she is an exquisite and consummate interpreter and the other which wants to be reduced to a condition of maudlin, factitious and fictitious lachrymosity with *Love's Old Sweet Song* and *A Perfect Day*, and would draw up their programmes in two distinct parts with all the music in one part separated by a decent interval from all the lachrymal gland excitants in the other, the music lovers could then escape and the others could have it all their own way.

Better still, if the implied distinction in the order of the programme is felt to be invidious, would be two complete programmes of two different concerts on those lines. Unfortunately prime donne are often megalomaniacs; they have a diseased and morbid fondness for vast audiences (i.e., the fees vast audiences sometimes mean) and these can only be secured by having recourse to devices which have nothing whatever to do with music—press agent caracolings and the singing of such things as I have already mentioned. They cannot be content with being artists, and only artists, like a Gerhardt or a Blanche Marchesi. It is the story of God and Mammon in another form.

The fact is that the prevalent attitude to music is all wrong, from public to most artists, with few exceptions such as the greatest musician of our time—a man of such Titan stature that others disappear in comparison with him—Ferruccio Busoni, an intellectual and artistic Colossus of an order that to find his peer one must go to such divine men of the Renaissance as Buonarroti or da Vinci. In fact, it is not too much to say it is sacrilegious and blasphemous. Music is regarded as a pastime, an amusement, a digestive, a carminative, an anti-spasmodic, an aphrodisiac, anything almost except what it is—an art, a religion. Unfortunately in English-speaking countries, still suffering as they are from Puritan inhibitions and the appalling heritage of habits of thought due to that monstrous period of English history, the Commonwealth, the mention of religion is apt to conjure up visions of a Sabbatarian stuffiness and long-faced long-collared misery that have no necessary connection with it at all. What I am trying to convey is that the performance of a great work of music is really a religious rite, an "elevating excitement of the soul" of the same kind as that experienced by an absorbed worshipper at a celebration of the most beautiful and profoundly moving ceremony known to the Western world, the High Mass of the Catholic Church.

It should be as unthinkable that a singer should sing in a place consecrated to music such things as *Dixie Land* or the *Old Folks at Home* as it would be to hear a priest read the spiciest and most indecent tales of a "Petit Parisien" from the pulpit of a Chartres or Monreale cathedral. Again, let me be not misunderstood; again one does not deny the validity or place of obscenity and the scandalous historiette—Havelock Ellis' remarkable observations on this matter in his "Impressions and Comments" might be profitably read—but one does dispute, and would, their intrusion into a place where they manifestly have no concern. As yet, however, we have no places consecrated to music; they are now political meeting houses, now prize fighter dens, now dance halls, now lupanars—and sometimes one hears music in them.

Yours, etc.,

KAIKHOSRU SORABJI.

London, N.W. 1.



## THE HIGH PRICE OF RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—... If the prices of records were brought more within the reach of the music-loving working classes I think the extra demand would more than make up for what the companies may think would be a loss of revenue... Seven and six is too much for a record, especially when the same is a trio. If it is a full orchestra playing there would be more reason, but even then the sum is *not* justified. No doubt these high prices are keeping many a wireless enthusiast—such as is now just beginning to realise more than ever the charm of good music—from indulging in a gramophone. Personally I think wireless is creating a longing for good music, and the recording companies should try to get these enthusiasts into the gramophone fold by placing their records within their reach. Bring the prices down to 4s., 3s. 6d., 3s., 2s. 6d., and 2s., and then see the rush for records!...

Chatham.

Yours faithfully,

H. H. SANFORD.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—... I really think that the time has arrived when strong comment should be made about the surfaces of records, particularly those of —. It is a rare occurrence to come across any record of theirs without, at any rate, *some* pimples. On page 327 you suggest removal of "motes" from records before starting to play with fibres, and I can only conclude that by the word "motes" you mean pimples. Surely it is up to the manufacturers to turn out their products in proper condition, particularly as the price charged for the best is very high... For jazz records these rough surfaces are of little consequence—with a nice symphony it's another matter.

Banbury.

Yours truly,

C. E. HANBURY.

## MOZART OPERAS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—In the February issue of your constantly improving journal, "Melochord" airs a strange grievance—viz., that the recording companies are not giving us enough early Verdi! My grievance is that early Verdi is being recorded *ad nauseam*. I suppose half, or more than half, the operatic records issued are excerpts from *Il Trovatore*, *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, and *Aida*; and, moreover, as your correspondent admits, the last three have already been completely recorded. As for the new complete *Carmen*, which "Melochord" also wants, this opera, too, is very liberally represented by well-recorded excerpts, vocal and orchestral, and has also been recorded completely already. It is surely expensive enough for the average man to purchase the exquisite new productions which the companies are now producing without asking for duplications *ad infinitum* of the above-mentioned stale and unprofitable productions! If any more of Verdi is to be produced let it be his best work—*Falstaff*, for instance.

Mr. Bradley's plea for complete Mozart operas is well justified and deserves warm support. Out of these pre-eminently great and happy works we have only a few arias and one or two duets. We have not, apart from overtures, been presented even with orchestral selections from these operas, and I hold that very good orchestral suites—which would be better than nothing—could be made from them. Mozart's operas, owing to the small forces employed, are eminently suited for recording; but, to my mind, the strongest argument for their issue on discs is that the admirers of Mozart so rarely have the opportunity of hearing the operas performed. This is where the gramophone can be of real service and give the highest pleasure. It can do for Mozart's operas what it has already done for much music seldom heard by the average man—e.g., Brahms' symphonies, Wagner's *Ring* and *Mastersingers*. The public for Mozart has grown enormously within recent years, but the itinerant opera companies (excluding the B.N.O.C., whose scope is unfortunately limited) do not realise this fact, and present us unfailingly with Verdi, Puccini, Gounod, Mascagni, and their sugary congeners.

Let us hope that H.M.V. or Columbia will come to the rescue with *Don Giovanni* or the *Magic Flute* complete. Mr. Bradley's suggested cast for the latter, including Madame Licette as Pamina, could hardly be bettered, but, on account of his excellent diction, and his rare appreciation of Mozartian wit, I should like to see Peter Dawson given some part. He would be an excellent Figaro. I hope your readers will roll up and support this demand for complete Mozart operas.

In conclusion I should like to mention the need for some records of the piano works of Brahms, for a complete recording of the Schubert *Quartet in D minor* (by the Leners), and of Beethoven's *Piano Trio* (Op. 97), by Catterall (or Sammons), Squire and Murdoch. It is to be hoped that this latter excellent combination will now give us some complete works instead of snippets. It is about time, too, that we had some variety in chamber music. String quartets are all very well and we are thankful for what we get, but let us have something new in the way of works for wind instruments; or, say, Mozart's bassoon concerto or one of his serenades or *divertimenti*.

Dublin.

Yours sincerely,

PAPAGENO.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—May I add my voice to those of your other correspondents who are clamouring for more records of Mozart opera? As stated by "E. L. G." in his letter published in last September's issue, *Il Seraglio* has been sadly neglected, and I have waited in vain for the beautiful tenor solos from this opera. In the old Beecham opera days Mr. Maurice D'Oisly delighted his audiences with these charming arias; could not he or some other equally gifted interpreter of Belmonte's part be persuaded to record them? Some of the sopranos solos are to be found in the Polydor catalogue, but even here there are no tenor records from *Il Seraglio*.

Yours faithfully,

Tufnell Park.

L. A. LUFF.

## "THE MUSIC TEACHER."

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—In the February issue your contributor of "American Standards," C. G. Burke, refers to the satisfaction THE GRAMOPHONE has awarded him (sic), and adds the following statement: "I find it the only medium in English that attempts to render impartial criticisms of records issued; not only commenting upon the mechanical excellence of the discs, but upon the quality of the music itself."

I wish to point out that this good office for gramophone users has been regularly performed, for four years to my own knowledge, by the monthly periodical named *The Music Teacher*. Being comparatively ignorant of music, I have made my modest purchases under its guidance, and gratefully acknowledge the boon such guidance has been to me. It is due to *The Music Teacher* that the high standard maintained by that publication in the precise sphere above mentioned should not be overlooked.

Yours truly,

Slough.

W. WILSON.

[We are glad to publish this tribute to a contemporary which has more than once shown its good will towards THE GRAMOPHONE.—ED.]

## THE JOTA.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Having lived in Spain for many years, and knowing some of the finest exponents of the jota personally, I feel I must take exception to the description of that dance by Joseph Hergesheimer, quoted in the Piano-Player Supplement for February by Mr. Sydney Grew. I was present at the annual "Fiesta de la Jota" at Zaragoza some years ago, Zaragoza being the capital of the old kingdom of Aragon and the home of the Jota Aragonesa. I met the prizewinners again some years later at the inauguration of the Aragonesa Club at Barcelona, a ceremony I was invited to attend in the company of a deputation from Teruel, one of the provincial Aragonesa capitals. This couple danced again in the club's theatre in the "Fiesta" held to celebrate the occasion, and they were kind enough to dance again for me in the open air, so that I could take some photographs. I have also frequently seen the dance at the Aragonesa village yearly fairs.

The jota is danced in "alpargatas," flat, rope-soled sandals, and there is no stamping of the heels, for there are no heels to stamp with. The dance begins with a leap and a rush and is all through the liveliest dance I have ever seen, as corresponds with the music. It is never languorous and sensual and is always danced by couples, a man and a woman. The woman never half closes her eyes under the brim of her hat, for she never wears a hat at all, either with or without a brim. An Aragonesa peasant woman in a hat would excite as much comment as a cricketer in England would





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|      | { Ev'rything you do—Fox-Trot                                      | Arcadians Dance Orch.          |
| 2547 | { I'm gonna bring a Watermelon (to my girl)<br>to-night)—Fox-Trot | Arcadians Dance Orch.          |
|      | { In Shadowland—Waltz   |                                |
| 2548 | { Tea for two—Fox-Trot<br>"No! No! Nanette")                      | Max Darweski's Dance Band      |
|      | { I love the Moon—(Intro.<br>"Hazel Eyes") Waltz                  |                                |
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if he appeared in a breastplate and spurs. Presumably the that described is a "sombbrero cordobés" used in a few Andalusian dances. A high comb is never worn; this is also Andalusian. The dance is much too energetic for a high comb to be worn, I imagine, apart from it being incorrect. The arms are never thrust down rigidly behind, as in Flamenco dancing, they are constantly used in the clapping of the castanets, which are not played with the fingers alone and with rigid arms, but practically suspended on the fingers' ends and flapped. Music hall artists sometimes include a sort of bastard jota in their repertoire, and dance it as a solo dance; these are always women and correctly attired for the dance or they would be laughed and hissed off the stage, as a bull-fighter would from the ring if he appeared without a hat, until the moment for the "brindis" before the final "suerte." These matters are supremely important in Spain, and land foreigners who dress themselves up without knowing the customs of the country into the most humiliating situations: the mere wearing a moustache with certain costumes being as ridiculous to a Spaniard as appearing at a garden party in evening clothes is to an Englishman. Some of your readers will no doubt remember seeing the Hermanos Gómez in "London, Paris, and New York" at the Pavilion, and will be able to corroborate my statements. The jota was correctly presented on that occasion, except for the accompaniment, which had to be orchestral, the two men taking it in turn to dance with their sister. I had the pleasure of making their acquaintance and they sang and played jotás for hours together when they visited me, for the pleasure of my friends, their performance at the theatre being confined to dancing at that time.

The dance described by the novelist appears to be any more or less nondescript Spanish music hall turn, and serves for the required local colour better than that frequently served up in novels, if the reader happens to have lived in the country whose customs are described, but of course it will hardly pass as a correct description of a particular dance for technical purposes. Anyone who wishes to play the jota correctly, without visiting Spain, should obtain one or two of Cecilio Navarro's H.M.V. gramophone records. By buying the *Estilos para bailar*, of which there are only one or two, he would get to know the rhythm of the jota, which is unique and has no variations except that it is taken more slowly for singing than for dancing, unless the voice is accompanying dancing, as is correct. This seems to me to be the only way of really getting to know the jota properly, without a visit to Spain. The following numbers from the H.M.V. Spanish catalogue are excellent, but I cannot give a number for the *Estilos para bailar*, but the title is sufficient and the record all that is needed to learn the dance rhythm. The best sung jotás are: G.C. 3 62238-9 (d.s.); (no initials) 3-62000-1 (d.s.); (no initials), 3-62219-20 (d.s.).

No. 3-62000-1 is particularly lovely, but the titles have been stuck on the wrong side on my record and probably on all.

The "coplas" on side 362001 are as follows, and "popular" (traditional):—

*Ansotana* (labelled "Aragonesa").

No se atisba un querer  
Cuando hay tierra en por medio.  
El agua bebida á moros  
Es la que quita la sed.

Love cannot be explored  
When there is land between.  
Water drunk up through the lips  
Is that which quenches thirst.

*Golondrina* (labelled "Mora").

El río vuelve á su cauce  
La golondrina á su nido  
Solo al corazón no vuelve  
La ilusión que se ha perdido.

The river returns to its source (bed).  
The swallow to her nest.  
Only to the heart never returns  
An illusion that has been lost.

These two deserve to be in the possession of everyone who cares for folk-music, the third is not worth transcribing though the music is good. There are three coplas on each side of these records. A jota recently published by Fleta is not genuine, but a musical comedy stunt; and it is sung with so much *rubato* that it is almost unrecognisable. There should be no *rubato*; the jota is dance music and the strict rhythm is always kept by a good singer.

Watford.

Yours faithfully,  
WYNDHAM TRYON.

[Mr. Sydney Grew, to whom the above letter was submitted, sends the following comment: "I welcome Mr. Wyndham Tryon's letter about the jota, first because it gives so much admirable information, and then because it directs attention to a number of records. The La Clavel person who appears in Hergesheimer's novel was not an Aragonese, but an Andalusian, and I suppose the jota she danced was one of those popular in the south. Then again, she was distinctly a music hall dancer, and so her jota—whether southern or not—would be one of the 'bastard jotás' of which Mr. Tryon speaks. This explains her comb, heels, hats, languorous sensuality, and other 'properties.'"

Nevertheless, I still think that Hergesheimer's description will help the player-pianists to perform many of the pieces I brought into my lessons, for some of the composers incorporate into their fantasias various emotional elements which do not appertain to the pure jota of Aragón and Navarre; Chabrier, indeed, in his *España*, blends the malagueña and the jota; and while the malagueña is not a dance, it is certainly a typical form embodying all those details of La Clavel's art which are not native to the jota.

Spanish music generally is a rare tangle; I thought in the beginning of my studies that I had got things all clear; then I began to discuss the matter with Spaniards, and soon the tangle returned, for everyone contradicted the others first, and before long himself. Albéniz did not mind giving two titles to the same piece, and some composers do not care to give a definite title at all. A Spanish editor, in a letter I received on the day Mr. Tryon's letter was placed in my hands, says that he can only trace the native music up to a certain point in art-music: "después, el desarrollo artístico de muchos temas es difícil de recopilar."—ED.]

#### PIANO RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I should like to draw your attention to the deplorable lack of really good pianoforte records at the present time. Since Columbia have apparently ceased to issue this class of music the H.M.V. seem to be the only concern that goes in for it at all, and the kind of music that they eke out from time to time, consisting mostly of drawing-room trifles, does not meet the demand.

In the first place we want more of Chopin. When are we to hear the two sonatas, the *Polonaise in F sharp minor*, the first and third scherzos, the ballades, and the incomparable *Fantasia in F minor*? These only bring us to the threshold of Chopin's genius, so far denied us. Also I suggest that the études and preludes should be recorded afresh, as most of those extant are unworthy of the composer, partly because they were recorded for the most part many years ago when pianoforte recording was not so perfect as to-day, and partly because the artists were not all ideally suited to the task. Even to-day amid the host of virtuosos, there seem to be very few who are imbued with that peculiar Polish temperament which is so necessary for the interpretation of that quality which has been described as Chopin's "velvety tenderness"; indeed, one might say that his only faithful interpreter of modern days has been Pachmann, only we have so few of his records that are really good. At present Moisewitch is possibly the most likely choice, or perhaps W. Rummel or Herbert Fryer; the first named we know, has a recording touch which equals anyone's, including Josef Hofmann.

I have so far only referred to Chopin, but there are others whose works we want to hear just as much; for instance, Schumann's *Etudes Symphoniques*, the études and *Second Polonaise* of Liszt, the *Andante Capriccio* and *Fantasia* of Mendelssohn, and also more of Rachmaninoff and Scriabin and York Bowen's brilliant *Polonaise*.

In conclusion I would say that, just as those who favoured orchestral music were not content until the great symphonies and quartets were recorded, there will be no satisfying piano enthusiasts (of which there are many) until those works which are worthy of the instrument appear in the catalogues. Personally I disagree emphatically with those who aver that the pianoforte does not record well. I have made a special study of this class of music and can safely say that, played on a reliable instrument, with good fibre needles, the records are absolutely satisfactory.

I am, yours very truly,

Norbury.

LESLIE HILL.



## ORATORIO ON PATHÉ'S.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—With reference to Mr. Herman Klein's article in your February issue, and his regret that he could find no soprano record of *Rejoice greatly (Messiah)* and *Hear ye, Israel (Elijah)*, and *I know that my Redeemer liveth (Messiah)*, may I say that I have a much-prized double-sided 14in. disc (Pathé) containing the first two titles, sung by Carrie Tubb, and the latter title on a 12in. (Zonophone), by Madam Deering. Whether Carrie Tubb's recording is still obtainable I can't say, but Madam Deering's appears in the 1922 Zonophone catalogue, bracketed with Haydn's *With Verdure Clad*. These are all old recordings and may or may not be worthy of Mr. Herman Klein's consideration, but personally I can still enjoy them as much now as when purchased about twelve years ago. Those by Carrie Tubb I consider the best, I mean as far as the recording goes, and this reminds me that I once read in the *Daily Telegraph* an article by you, Sir, wherein you said when giving comparisons that "In some ways the Pathé record was the best of all." I agree, and although to-day I plump for the Columbia New Process, I yet sigh for the pre-war naturalness of the Pathé and wonder whether you cannot use your powerful influence to induce Messrs. Pathé to give us records more worthy of their Al recording.

Acton.

Yours "Pathetically,"

J. R. WARRY.

## THE POLYDOR CATALOGUE.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I see in this month's issue of THE GRAMOPHONE that you are inviting comments on certain orchestral records in the Polydor catalogue. As I possess a good many of these I will give you my opinion for what it is worth. I cannot go into a detailed description of each work nor do I expect that you would bless me if I did; however, my general criticism is based on the following records in my collection:—Beethoven: *Symphonies Nos. 1, 3, 4*. Schumann: *Symphony No. 4*. Strauss: *Also sprach Zarathustra*, *Tod and Verklärung*. Wagner: *Faust Overture*. Berlioz: *Carnaval Romain Overture*; and several vocal excerpts from Wagner's operas. I have no hesitation in recommending all these to really keen collectors, the price is very reasonable and the joy of obtaining these masterpieces in complete form is not difficult to imagine.

The tone of all the instruments strike me as extraordinarily natural, strings and wood-wind are quite distinct, which cannot be said of some records I have heard. Now, as to that much-discussed subject surface noise. The Polydor records have a more noticeable hiss than the present English H.M.V. records, but I thank the gods that it is an even hiss which one's ear soon gets accustomed to, and not that awful pulsating grind which one meets so often to-day on first-class records. So far I haven't struck any air-bubbles...

London, W. 8.

Yours truly,

EDWARD ROBEY.

## THE IMMORTAL HOUR.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Your paper—I almost wrote our paper, so well does it represent us all—has such a wonderful knack of getting things done, no matter how impossible they may seem, that I venture to draw your attention to the fact that we have so far only a scrap of the *Immortal Hour*, and to hope that we may yet persuade some recording company to give us the whole opera. I am one of the hundreds who repeatedly saw the opera, and I feel sure very many others would rejoice to have it recorded. If you are good enough to publish this, I would earnestly urge all who agree with me to write to you and signify their concurrence; and I believe our numbers would be sufficient to prove that it would pay to record the opera. Regarding other matters: When are the Vocalion Company going to give us the rest of Ravel's *Tombeau de Couperin*? Also I feel there is room for more, much more, Bach; and, dare I say it, Scriabin.

London, S.W. 5.

Faithfully yours,

R. B. WITHERS.

## RACHMANINOFF'S PIANO CONCERTO No. 2.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I heartily endorse your correspondent "H. S. G.'s" remarks on the recorded version of this work (Victor 8064, 8065, 8066), but would draw your readers' attention to the fact that these discs belong to the red seal duet class, and therefore the

price of each is \$2.50 instead of \$2, which means approximately 11s. 6d. instead of about 9s. 6d. for the ordinary red seal records. However, even at this figure the records are well worth having and the recording is far in advance of the English concerto standard. Another set of Victor records of outstanding merit is the Schumann *Quintette in E flat major*, magnificently recorded on two 12in double-sided red seal discs (Nos. 6462 and 6463) by the Flonzaley Quartet and Ossip Gabrilowitsch, the famous composer, pianist, and conductor. For some reason or other these records do not come under the duet class and are consequently listed at standard price. Nos. 6225 and 6373 of Liszt's *Symphonic Poem No. 3 (Les Preludes)*, by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra under Willem Mengelberg are I think the finest orchestral records I have heard. There are many Victor orchestral and instrumental records well worth having, and the few I have mentioned will form a substantial addition to even the finest library. Victor catalogues and records can be obtained through any H.M.V. dealer and the discs usually take three months to arrive!

Hillingdon.

Yours faithfully,

MOORE ORR.

## PATHÉ RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Further to Mr. Chapman's article on Pathé's in the January GRAMOPHONE, may I add a few words? Really, compared with the French or the American catalogue, the English catalogue is, as Mr. Chapman says, "in the main a depressing pamphlet." On the vocal side, next to H.M.V., Messrs. Pathé Co. have got the best artists from the Chicago Civic Opera Co.; Scala, Milan; Opera and Opera Comique, Paris; Monnaie, Bruxelles; and still a great many of them are kept out from the catalogue. It is a pity to have so few records from L. Muratore, such an artist incontestably the best French tenor, and according to American critics the only one to succeed the late E. Caruso at the Metropolitan Opera Co., had not he been bound by contract to the Chicago Civic Opera.

Can we hope in the future to have more vocal items from this artist, also from E. Clement, Borgatti, Chas. Fontaine, Noté (the best baritone perhaps that France has ever produced), Albers, a fine interpreter of Schumann's *Lieder*, and among sopranos Rosa Raisa, Kousnesoff, Boninsegna, and Fanny Heldy? Cannot the opera *Manon* be added to the series of complete operas? On the orchestral side the Pathé Co. have got the best of the continental orchestras and still they are far behind other recording houses, except, however, for a dozen records from the famous Lamoureux Orchestra, which appeared last year on Pathé or Actuelle list.

What about Debussy's *L'Après midi d'un faune*, which was recorded at the same time? To any collectors of unusual and good records I would recommend the following Pathé, all double-sided:—

BAND.—*Casse-Noisette* (5505-6-7); *Norwegian Rhapsody*, Lalo (5028); *Samson and Delilah* (5024); *Ballet de Sylvia*, Delibes (5670); *Scenes Pittoresques* (5408); *Impressions d'Italie* (5463-4).

ORCHESTRAL.—*L'Arlésienne Overture and Minuet* (5510); *Capriccio Italien* (5487); *Dances Polovtsiennes* (5771, 5782); *L'Apprenti Sorcier* (5146-7); *España Rhapsody* (5761); *Marche Turcque*, Mozart (5043).

INSTRUMENTAL. Violin solos:—Jacques Thibaud.—*Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* (5158). *Second Polonaise* (Wieniawsky) and *Scherzando* (Marsick) (5708). Buica.—*La Doina and Danses populaires Roumaines* (5745).

VOCAL.—G. Muzio:—*Aida: Ritorna vincitor and Patria mia* (5644). Fanny Heldy:—*Madame Butterfly: Sur-la-Mer and Air de l'Oasis*, Antar (5756). Lucien Muratore:—*Carmen: Flower Song and Tu ne sauras Jamais* (5204). T. Schipa:—*Barbiere di Siviglia and Cavatina* (5215). P. Franz:—*Sigurd: Esprit Gardiens and Souvenir poignant* (5569). Borgatti:—*Lohengrin, Mon cygne Aimé* (7710). C. Sherwood:—*La Bohème, Che Gelida and Martha, M'appari* (5553). Giorgini:—*Mefistofele, Dai campi dai prati* (5198).

DUETS.—Yvonne Gall and Noté:—*Rigoletto*, Acts 2 and 3 (5558) Mme. Vallandri and Mons. Vaguet:—*Manon: Letter Duet and Duet*, Act 1 (5278). Boninsegna and Nini Frascani:—*Giocanda, L'Amo come, and Aida*, Act 2, *Aida Amnesia* (5288). From the complete opera *Carmen*:—M. Affre, Mlle. Merentie, and chorus: *Habanera* (T.31) and *Seguedille* (T.35). From *Romeo and Juliet*:—M. Affre and Y. Gall: *Ah ne fais pas encore* (T.10).

Apologising for the length of this letter,

Yours faithfully,

P. PIERRE.

Kentish Town



## NOTES AND QUERIES

[Each comment, question, or answer should be written clearly on a separate slip of paper and addressed to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, W.1, as early as possible in the month. Full name and address must in all cases be given, for reference.]

(247) **Big Diaphragms.**—May I be permitted to make a prediction? It is that the Big Diaphragm will die of inertia—its own, which, I suggest, will prove such a strain on the record track as will make the use of such diaphragms too expensive on records to suit the purse of the average gramophonist. As this prediction is the result of pure theory, your readers may be glad to hear what the users of these novelties have to say on the matter of wear and tear of records.—C. B., Ashtead.

(248) **Centring by Angle-pieces.**—Whenever a sound-box is changed for another, and whenever there is a difference in the length of needle used, the centring of the needle in the spindle is altered. But for good reproduction and for justice to the records the centring must be correct. It follows that one ought always to have either a telescopic tone-arm, or a straight tone-arm with a sliding angle-piece that can be changed by a screw. I have such a tone-arm with three angle pieces, two for ordinary records (one for 60° and one for 45°), and one for Edison and Pathé records. I find it very little trouble to centre for each sound-box and for each needle, and that the result is worth it. The Astra, the Jewel, the mica Superphone, the hornite Superphone, and the No. 2 H.M.V., with their characteristic differences, give excellent results with Edison and Pathé records; and no doubt other sound-boxes would do so also. My Jewel was originally for goose-neck H.M.V., but I had it reset for straight tone-arm by Mr. Henry Seymour. It is a great convenience and pleasure to be able to use all classes of records on the same machine. All these sound-boxes, when new, with the Edison-Pathé angle-piece look upwards and forwards, instead of downwards, as Edison's own soundbox and the goose-neck Jewel do.—D. W., Falmouth.

(249) **Eccles Sonata** (*vide* January, p. 275).—The labels of my H.M.V. record show that it is a Sonata by Eccles, in two parts, played by Warwick Evans, accompanied by Hamilton Harty (H.M.V. D.343). It may be the same as the sonata played by W. H. Squire on Columbia L.1053, as it is also in four movements; but I have not heard the Squire record. On my H.M.V. record the true 'cello quality is attained and Mr. Warwick Evans shows to advantage the beautiful tone of his excellent instrument. It is a pity that the Gramophone Co. should have deleted it from their catalogue.—E. F. B., Tufnell Park.

(250) **Brahms' Quartet in A minor.**—I am curious to know whether any of your readers have noticed anything wrong with the "Andante Moderato" of Brahms' "Quartet in A minor," played by the Lener Quartet (Col. L.1520). Either my ear is wrong or the record is and I want to know which! Every time I play it and on whatever machine during the first few bars the pitch seems to rise gradually. Can it be that in making the record the players started to play before the turntable had attained a correct and steady speed? That is what it sounds like to me and to several friends whose attention I have drawn to it. The first time or two I played the record I thought I must have put the needle on before the record had attained playing speed.—W. A. C., Halifax.

(251) **Best Records Wanted.**—Of Norman Allin, Dame Clara Butt, Kathleen Destournel, Frieda Hempel, Frank Mullings, the late Evan Williams (in Welsh and English).—O. N.

(252) **Records Wanted.**—Can you tell me of a good record of (a) "Mountain Lovers," (b) Tosti's "Goodbye," and (c) "Home to our Mountains" duet in English? Is there any record of (d) "Un fragment de Mendelssohn," a pianoforte piece, please?—F. J. D., Chepstow.

(253) **Art Supplements.**—Whilst appreciating those already issued, would it be possible to give us reliable portraits of the Old Masters: Mozart, Haydn, Handel, Bach, Beethoven, etc. . . ? Such portraits would be well worth framing and would make an interesting collection for one's "music-room."—G. L. E., Liverpool.

(254) **"Lady Molly."**—Are there any existing records of this? I once had one recorded by Walter Hyde on Odeon.—A. M., Swinton.

(255) **Karna.**—I should be glad if you could furnish me with the name and address of the maker of the "Karna" gramophone.—E. B., Swinton.

(256) **Adapted Pathé's.**—As a result of correspondence arising from the publication of my article on "Adapted" Pathé's in your January issue, I am able to give the following information which I hope may prove of service to some of your readers. Columbia-Continental and Columbia-H.M.V. adapters can be obtained, not from the Columbia Company, as most people would naturally think, but from the Murdoch Trading Company, 59-61, Clerkenwell Road, E.C.1. This firm sells two fibre cutters at reasonable prices. Spare blades for the so-called Columbia cutter ("Perfecta") can be had from G. A. Bryan, Ltd., Southwark Street, S.E.1. Pathé's no longer make the brass soundbox referred to in my article, the aluminium now being their best. One of my correspondents writes in eulogistic terms of this reproducer and the Beltona-Peridulce, both of which (he says) give excellent results on his large Table Grand Grafonola.—John C. W. Chapman, Tulse Hill.

(257) **Spook Voices.**—May I add the following to your collection? (i) "Leonora," No. 3, Part 1, H.M.V. D.145 (recording No. 0701), in which a voice is faintly audible in the first groove, before the entry of the orchestra. (ii) A very glaring example, "I arise from dreams of thee" (Pike—Dawson), Zono. 1358 (X.44373). A voice is distinctly audible, also on the first groove, saying, "A little bit more—little more." This is even clearer than the voice at the end of the first "Siegfried" record.—W. L. P., London, E. 5.

(258) **Record Wanted.**—Can you help me to obtain a record of a piece of band music called "Marche Indienne" (descriptive)? It was played by a Guards' Band in Hyde Park about twelve years ago. I have searched the catalogues in vain.—T. W., London, N.W.8.

(259) **Carmen.**—Possibly Mr. Klein is not aware that the Pathé Co. have recorded this opera complete on 27 discs, the Carmen being Mme. Merentie. It is in their English catalogue.—C. F. H., Colwyn Bay.

(260) **Nasality** (*vide* August, p. 107).—Here is a recent experience: Ophelia's song on H.M.V. D.968 was found to give an unpleasantly nasal reproduction with an H.M.V. No. 2 sound-box, attached temporarily to a hornless Zonophone. Not having a full-sized H.M.V. instrument at my disposal, I tried the same record with the No. 2 H.M.V. on the Orchestrathone (Vocacrola), and found there was an entire absence of nasality, as was also the case when the same record was played on an instrument with the pleated diaphragm. The conclusion I draw is that nasality may result from the dimensions of the tone-way being less than is suitable for that particular sound-box—however good the voice, the record and the sound-box may be. Will you or your experts kindly say whether the observation is correct and the conclusion sound, and if so, offer an explanation?—"Tristram Shandy."

(261) **Mozart Trios.**—The Editor (p. 364, 365) seems to have slightly stumbled with reference to the Vocation Mozarts. Op. 16, No. 7 on D.02150, the last issued, is, I take it, incomplete. The "Trio in E flat" (K.498, I presume, the K number not being on the labels) and the "Trio in E major" (K.542) are on three Vocation discs—D.02015 (second and third movements of E flat), D.02064 (first movement of each trio) and D.02091 (second and third movements of E major). As this arrangement is somewhat unusual and further complicated by the different pianists, these trios are likely to be overlooked by those searching for fine chamber music.—J. C. W. C., Tulse Hill.

[Quite right. It is the fault of the London Editor for not checking my catalogue references. I work from my records which are often labelled in an obsolete way. However, any reader who has our "List of Recorded Chamber Music" will find the trios properly described there.—Ed.]

(262) **Records Wanted.**—Can you inform me if the songs "You along with me, and I along with you" and "God bless you" have been recorded by any company?—J. B. B., N.W.1.

(263) **Record Wanted.**—Can anyone tell me if there is a record of the song, "The meeting of the waters," words by Thomas Moore?—Miss R. A. H., Church Stretton.

(264) **Gottlieb's Orchestra.**—Perhaps some of your readers can inform me (1) where any records of this orchestra are to be had and the numbers, (2) names of other orchestras most nearly approaching the combination of Gottlieb's.—G. F. A., Argyllshire.

(265) **Advice Wanted.**—(i) Would a wooden tone-arm improve the tone on a pedestal gramophone with polished oak interior horn (round) and cast-iron throat, or is a metal tone-arm best? (ii) Would a Beltona-Peridulce sound-box give a fuller tone with Euphonic needles than an ordinary 65 mm. box? (iii) The name of a good sound-box for sopranos, violin, and tenor records.—A. F., Brockenhurst.



(266) **Best Record Wanted.**—The "Bohemian Girl Overture" (Balfe).—A. S. W., Glasgow.

(267) **Title Wanted.**—Can any reader or listener tell me the name of the song sung on the wireless from the Bournemouth station on Friday night, March 13th, by a concert party, the chorus of which began "A river of gold in a world of dreams."—J. E. S., Hammersmith.

(268) **"Le Chasseur Maudit."**—Is the fine Columbia recording of this "cut," and if so, to what extent? Presuming the work is in one movement, I do not understand the finality of the chord at the end of Part 1, and I am suspicious of a symphonic poem which lasts only about six minutes! Is this in Mr. Scholes' book?—G. L. J., Croydon.

(269) **Salt Water Ballads.**—Are there really good records of "A Wanderer's Song" and "Mother Carey"? I am not very pleased with Peter Dawson's. It is indistinct and has a coarse band accompaniment.—G. L. J., Croydon.

(270) **Some Good Records.**—The best in my collection are:—H.M.V. D.B.280, Alma Gluck, "She wandered down the mountain side"; D.M.114, Gadske and Caruso, "O terra Addio"; D.K.103, Caruso and Elman, "Elégie"; D.B.152, Bori, "Un di al tempo"; Col. 7327, Stralio, "I wonder if love is a dream"; 7355, Stracciari, "Prologue" (Pagliacci); Parlo. E.10196, Bettendorf and Jaeger, "Night of Stars." I hope this list will be of use to readers who have not got them all.—G. W., Magdalen College School.

(271) **Metal Record Case.**—Can any of your readers tell me where to get a patent metal record case, which I remember having seen? It had some kind of screw arrangement whereby the space inside could be made larger or smaller, as required, so that any number of records can be carried without movement inside the case.—W. B., Kingsway.



## ANSWERS TO QUERIES

[Will readers please notice particularly that answers should be written on separate slips?—Ed.]

(209) **Berlioz's "Faust"**—Elisa Petri (mezzo-soprano) records "Il re di Thule" for Fonotipia. The reverse is "S'apra per te" from "Samson and Delilah"; the number of the record is 92392, and it costs 5s. This record is obtainable at the Gramophone Exchange, 29, New Oxford Street, London.—A. M. G. B., Knebworth.

(211) **More Snows of Yesteryear.**—*Alvarez*: Records with piano accompaniment in the Pathé French list, 1921, 0023, 0024, 0190, 0025, 0061, 0204, 3022, 3024, 3026, 3053. *Victor Maurel*: recorded for the Gramophone Co. many years ago. I got the following records (Fonotipia) last year. They are very old:—B.39032, "O Marechiaro" (Tosti) and 39042, "Otello (Era la notte)" (Verdi); B.39041, "Don Giovanni (Serenata)" (Mozart) and 39247, "Ninon" (Tosti); B.62016, "Falstaff (Quand'ero paggio)" (Verdi) and B.62017, "Aux temps du grand roi" (Tosti); all piano accompaniment. *Jean de Reszke*: He is believed to have made records for the Gramophone Co. which so far have not been published. His name also appeared in the first list of Fonotipia artists, but no records. *Edouard de Reszke*: Recorded for Columbia many years ago. I have his "Infelice (Ernani)" and know of two other records. *Ancona* and *Martin*: A number of their records appear in Victor No. 2. *Albert Salega*: I don't think he ever recorded. *Paoli*: Made five solo, five duets and trios from "Otello" for H.M.V., so presumably he sang the part.—M. H., Sutton, Thirsk.

(211) There are two records of Mario Ancona in the current English Pathé catalogue: "Di Provenza il mar" from "Traviata," and "Strofe de Toreador" from "Carmen." Also following in obsolete list: "Serenata, Deh! vieni" ("Don Giovanni"), "All'erta, Marinar" ("L'Africaine"), "O casto fior" ("Il Re de Lahore"), "Vien Leonora!" ("La Favorita"). In the French Pathé lists for 1914, there are a number of records by Albert Alvarez, tenor.—C. H., Colwyn Bay.

(229) **Caruso.**—"No, Pagliaccio, non son!" In my copy of this record these words are the first which Caruso sings, so it is difficult to understand how his voice can change from that point. At the beginning and end of the record, however, Caruso seems to be shouting, quite spoiling what might otherwise have been a very fine record. His G on "sperai" is perfect.—F. W. N., Weston-super-Mare.

(231) **"Lohengrin Prelude."**—I think the surfaces of all the issues of this record by the Parlophone Co. are rough in places, and it would appear that there is a flaw in the matrix. I myself tried three records before I bought it, and though the one I selected is better than either of the other two it is far from perfect. Apart from this occasional grinding it is a splendid record.—W. A. C., Halifax.

(234) **Columbia Grafonola.**—It is of no importance that the needle should touch the spindle and this point, by itself, does not decide whether the needle-track alignment is correct. All the H.M.V. machines I have seen have their tone-arms arranged in this way, but their tracking is not correct. If the angle formed by the diaphragm and the tone-arm vector is on the right hand side of the vector (facing the machine) your needle track alignment is more nearly correct than would be the case if the needle just touched the spindle. (The vector is the straight line joining the tone-arm pivot and the needle.)—F. W. N., Weston-super-Mare.

(234) My experience suggests that the overlap at the level of the record—i.e., in the playing position—has been overestimated. On New Columbia machines it seems to vary between about  $\frac{1}{16}$  in and  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. The tracking error has undoubtedly been increased by this, though even so it compares favourably with that of many other makes. My measurements of a number of Columbia machines show an error of from  $13^{\circ}$  to  $16^{\circ}$  at the outside and from  $2^{\circ}$  to  $5^{\circ}$  at the inside of a record.—P. W., Putney.

(235) **Best Records Wanted.**—(a) Albert Hall Orchestra (H.M.V.), (b) New Queen's Hall Orchestra (H.M.V.), (c) Albert Hall and Symphony Orchestras (H.M.V.), (d) Hempel, vocal (H.M.V.) (e) McCormack, vocal (H.M.V.).—J. E. S., Hammersmith.

(235) It would be very difficult to find a set of records of the "Ballet Egyptien" (Luigini) equal to the two 12in. black label records, Nos. D.16 and D.17, issued by H.M.V. and played by the New Queen's Hall Light Orchestra, conducted by Mr. Alick Maclean, price 6s. 6d. each. This piece is a favourite of mine and I heard a number of different versions before deciding on those mentioned, which far surpassed any others.—J. R., St. Helens.

(240) **A Gipsy's Song.**—I should like to further the request of E. P. (Wellington) for a recording of "Down by the river side." I heard it under similar circumstances to E. P., and think it is quite a melodious old song and would have a market, as would also "Belle Mahone" and "Belle Mahone's Reply." They are not, perhaps, great songs, but of that type which make many people, justly or unjustly, remark "there are no songs like the old ones of our fathers' day."—S. B., Dewsbury.

(242) **Piccaver.**—I do not think there are any records by Alfred Piccaver published by an English firm. The Polydor catalogue, however, contains 18 double-sided records made by him which are in "Price classes" 7 and 7m.—W. A. C., Halifax.

(244) **Best Records Wanted.**—Lappas on Columbia, D.1463, with an excellent reading of "The Flower Song" from "Carmen," or by Gigli on H.M.V.—J. E. S., Hammersmith.

## Gramophone Tests

Many suggestions have been received about the kind of re-union which would give most satisfaction this summer; and opinion seems to be crystallising in the direction of a more or less all-day gathering at which our readers could not only meet each other, but could inspect "all the latest models" and gadgets at their leisure—with an evening session for some form of public competitive tests. The success of such an undertaking would depend mainly on the response which the Trade would make to the invitation, and also on the suitability of the date chosen. Further suggestions will be welcome.

## Correction

Eric Marshall, the famous baritone, was inadvertently referred to by "P. P." on p. 388 as a tenor. This was rating him *too high!*



# Gramophone Societies' Reports

[Reports must reach the London Office before the fifteenth day of the month for inclusion in the next number. No report should exceed 350 words, unless for some special reason more space is urgently required. Items from programmes must be incorporated in the report; programmes separately attached cannot be printed.]

**CARDIFF AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The above Society was inaugurated at an enthusiastic meeting held in the Queen's Café, Cardiff, on Thursday, February 26th last. A strong committee has been formed, and Mr. N. O. Davies, of Swanbridge, was elected Chairman. Mr. Evan G. Jones, the prime mover in the formation of the Society, was appointed Secretary and Treasurer.

The Society will be run on lines similar to societies in other towns, and has for its objects the encouragement of the appreciation of good music, the fostering of the art of listening to the best class of music, and the providing of opportunities for social intercourse amongst those interested in the gramophone and recorded music. It will therefore be seen that the ideals of the Society are such that it is not proposed to deal at all with the technicalities of the gramophone itself, or with works which are musically unimportant. The Society will have the whole of recorded music to draw upon, and it is anticipated that several distinguished people will honour the Society with lecture-recitals.

The Presidency of the Society has been accepted by Sir Walford Davies, whilst Vice-Presidencies have been accepted by Mr. Compton Mackenzie, the editor of *THE GRAMOPHONE*, Mr. Percy A. Scholes, the eminent music critic, and Mr. Walter Yeomans, Principal of the Educational Department of the Gramophone Company, Ltd., London. The headquarters of the Society are the Forester's Hall, Charles Street, Cardiff, and the first meeting was held on Thursday, March 12th, when Mr. T. Huntley gave a recital, "The Development of Opera." Mr. Trevor Price will give a lecture-recital on April 2nd, entitled "The Chain of Composers," and on April 23rd Mr. H. L. Rink, of London, a lecturer of the Gramophone Co., Ltd., will give a non-technical lecture-demonstration on "The History of the Gramophone." The Society will meet on Thursdays once every three weeks during the winter session, and once monthly during the summer. The annual subscription to the Society is: gentlemen, 5s.; ladies, 3s. 6d. All musically interested and desirous of joining the Society are given a cordial welcome to attend the meetings. Application for Membership, or for further particulars, should be made to the undersigned, 26, Enid Street, Cardiff.—EVAN G. JONES, *Secretary*.

**DUBLIN GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The first half of the February meeting of the Society must have delighted the hearts of Wagnerians, consisting as it did of "An Hour with Wagner," provided by Mr. H. G. Smith, who prefaced his demonstration by an interesting survey of the reformation in opera brought about by Wagner, by means of a concern for purely dramatic considerations unknown in the earlier Italian opera, by his treatment of musical motives, and by the entirely new importance which he assigned to orchestration. Mr. Smith gave a series of records from *Tannhäuser*, *The Flying Dutchman*, *The Mastersingers*, and *The Ring*, showing by brief comments how each illustrated some aspect of Wagner's contribution to the development of operatic music. For the latter half of the evening's entertainment Mr. Gilbert Archer was responsible, and a mere mention of the composers represented on his programme will give sufficient evidence of its high character: Mozart, Handel, Schumann, Brahms, Weber, Mendelssohn. Four soprano records gave us an opportunity of comparing the respective degrees of excellence of Elena Gerhardt, Frieda Hempel, Florence Austral, and Emmy Heckmann-Bettendorf. Gerhardt, in Schumann's *Der Nussbaum*, and Austral in *Softly sighs the breath of even* from Weber's *Der Freischütz*, were especially pleasing. The finale of Brahms' *Symphony in C minor* gave great satisfaction. Mr. Archer laid stress on the value of fibre needles, which he used throughout the evening, making no exception even in the case of such a powerful work as the *Messiah* chorus, *Lift up your heads*. The result seemed to bear out his contention that fibre needles were not only more economical, but also more effective.

At the conclusion of the programme, the Hon. Secretary read to the meeting a description of the Balmain gramophone, which he received from Mr. Balmain together with plans, which were

passed round and discussed by the members.—H. M. HARRISS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

**CITY OF LEEDS GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.**—At the open monthly meeting held at headquarters on February 17th we had the pleasure of a visit from Mr. M. Baritz, who for a couple of hours entertained and enlightened us in a very delightful way upon the life and music of Mozart, illustrating his lecture with more than a dozen selections from the works of that prince of musicians. In briefly reviewing Mozart's sad and short life Mr. Baritz alluded to the almost incredible precocity of his genius (whose early promise was so amply fulfilled in his after-life) and also to the wonderful power of Mozart's memory, as illustrated by the famous feat performed in connection with the Easter Music heard in the Sistine Chapel. The lecturer then gave a short analysis of the chief of Mozart's operas, the three great symphonies, and some of the beautiful and exceedingly original quartets. He claimed that Mozart had left no branch of the art unenriched by his genius and that he took a high place in all. Gifted with an inexhaustible vein of the richest, purest melody his music appeals to all, and in spite of great deficiencies in the librettos of his operas the charm of the music and the masterly combination of effects shown in the concerted pieces and finales command the unlimited admiration of every true musician. The following were among the records played to illustrate the lecture: *Overtures to The Magic Flute* and the *Marriage of Figaro*, *Symphony in E flat*, and the quartets in G and C major, together with several vocal selections from the operas.

Owing to adverse circumstances the attendance was not commensurate with the occasion, but the rapt attention and frequent applause given to the lecture clearly demonstrated the enjoyment Mr. Baritz had afforded the audience, who were pleased to hear in response to a very hearty vote of thanks that he hoped to speak to them again in the near future.—R. L. JACKSON, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

## SHEFFIELD GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.

Mr. J. H. Holmes is such an indefatigable worker for the Society that we always look for something exceptional when his name appears at the head of the programme, and we were not disappointed on February 17th. His contribution was "An Evening with Mozart," and it was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone present. The lecturette on the life and works of the amazing Mozart was both educative and entertaining. Delivered in breezy fashion and interspersed with humorous anecdotes, it kept up the interest from start to finish. The great composer died at a comparatively early age, but notwithstanding this, he passed down to posterity nearly 800 compositions, ranging from symphonies to operas. Obviously it would be an almost impossible task to give a representative selection of these in one evening, so Mr. Holmes contented himself with Mozart's more important operatic and symphonic gems, and the twenty-five items on the programme were really first class. We had excerpts from *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Il Seraglio*, *The Magic Flute*, also the No. 39 symphony and various instrumental items. The artists included Galli-Curci, Chaliapine, Journet, Radford, Kirkby Lunn, McCormack, Sembrich, Heifetz, also several orchestras of the front rank. Altogether, the fare provided left little to be desired, and the hearty vote of thanks proposed by Mr. F. W. Thompson and seconded by the undersigned was well merited by Mr. Holmes. The only fault one can find with such a programme is that it intimidates us into spending more than we can properly afford on new records!

Our President, Mr. Duncan Gilmour, junior, is always ready and willing to "fill the bill" with a series of records, and at our meeting on March 3rd he kindly loaned to us one of his Gilbert and Sullivan series. *Patience* was the opera, and it proved as popular as ever. "Bright and breezy" was evidently the slogan of the two immortal collaborators, and their works never fail to please, particularly when rendered by the D'Oyley Carte Company. At the conclusion of the programme the "fit and proper" resolution



was carried in no uncertain fashion, and the remaining time at our disposal was occupied in hearing the new H.M.V. issues.—THOS. H. BROOKS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

**BRIXTON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The March meeting held at New Morris Hall, Bedford Road, Clapham, S.W., provided a programme by Mr. Little: Act 1 of *The Meistersingers* (Wagner) and the first of a series of technical talks by Mr. G. W. Webb. Mr. Little's programme was of a "Celebrity" nature, and fully maintained his reputation for quality. I refrain from mentioning particular items for they were all first class. The machine in use during the evening was an Orchorsol, kindly loaned by Messrs. The Orchorsol Company. Mr. Webb's entertaining talk was of an intimate fashion, telling us in simple yet comprehensive language what to look for when purchasing a gramophone, stressing the point that the machine is to provide music, and this it cannot do if it is a nice piece of furniture yet housing inferior mechanism. These talks will be a feature of future meetings, and will be developed to embrace all subjects dealing with the gramophone.

I wish to make special mention of records sent to this Society by the Parlophone Company; these are welcome additions to our library, especially the *Surprise Symphony* (Haydn), deserving all the praise given. Each meeting finds us growing in numbers, seventeen new members have been enrolled during the last three months; this may be considered excellent progress and encouraging for all concerned. The next meeting, April 7th, Mr. E. M. Ginn will personally demonstrate the gramophone associated with his name. Visitors are invited; enquiries to Mr. J. T. Fisher, 28a, Fieldhouse Road, Balham, S.W.—S. N. COLLINS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

**EAST LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—For the eighty-fourth monthly meeting held at headquarters on Saturday, February 21st, 1925, the programme consisted of a demonstration of the E.M.G. hand-made gramophone, by the maker, Mr. E. M. Ginn, of 267, High Holborn, W.C. The programme of records played was arranged by Messrs. Harley and Worley, who included some really good test records in the hope of finding a weak spot by their faulty reproduction on the E.M.G. machine. The result of this test was that not only was no weak spot found, but that the E.M.G. excelled on everything and made many friends amongst the "wise (gramophonic) men of the East." Mr. Ginn prefaced the programme by explaining many details about his machine, drawing special attention to the correct needle tracking, he having adopted the Wilson bend, and also to the fact that the machine was fitted with the new "Luxus" sound-box. (Probably the first public demonstration of this type of sound-box.)

During the first half fibre needles were used exclusively and the volume and tone of the E.M.G. easily filled our commodious headquarters. Amongst some of the records played, a word of praise must be given to the *Laudate Dominum* (Parlophone R.20001), sung by the Sistine-Vatican Choir. Despite the remarks of the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE, this record played quite easily with a fibre needle. Another new artist to the gramophone world was attentively listened to, and his playing of Bach's *Air on G string* was much enjoyed. This artist is Feuermann (Parlophone 10238). It was hoped to play the complete Parlophone set of the *Scheherazade Symphonic Poem* at the interval, but time would not permit, so this item will be included in the March programme. I have had the pleasure of hearing this complete work, and it reflects great credit on the Parlophone Company. The orchestration is wonderful. Space will not permit me to go more fully into this composition of Rimsky-Korsakov's. Steel needles of various make and tone were chiefly used during the second half, the result being that the E.M.G. machine was again a pronounced success. The reproduction of such records as the quartet from *Rigoletto* (H.M.V. D.Q.100), Rosing's *Song of the Flea* (Vocalion A.0207), Galli-Curci's *Io son Titania* (H.M.V. D.B.264), and the *Rhapsody in Blue* (H.M.V. C.1171) was perfect, and at the conclusion of the meeting it was unanimously agreed that Mr. Ginn had demonstrated a machine which not only does him credit as a manufacturer by its tone and finish, but is also by far the best value placed before the gramophone public. A word in conclusion: the "Luxus" sound-box is, I feel sure, going to fill a long-felt want. Its all-round qualities are excellent.

Particulars of the Society will be sent on application to the Secretary, Mr. W. J. Worley, 209, Masterman Road, East Ham.

**THE SOUTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—From the multitude of reproducers of sound as exemplified by the gramophone, it is our present place to speak of the Lenthall Gramophone,

which, by reason of certain principles of construction, has recently made an interesting début, and was the subject under discussion at the meeting of this Society on February 28th. Certain principles of manufacture have been mentioned, among the chief of which is the reproducer itself. Here we notice a departure from routine in the fact that the diaphragm is of spun aluminium, and the tone-arm of the same material, the type of goose-neck used being of such a design as to describe a correct angle of the sound-box with the record, which has recently been the theme of much correspondence. The reproduction, ranging through some 20 records with the unfamiliar medium, was found (perhaps through inexperience) somewhat unequal. The demonstrator brought a supply of records with him, in which connection it ought to be conceded that they did not appear to have been specially selected, as is so often the case on these occasions, and therefore it seems our privilege to present as fair an account as we can.

Lenthall records:—(1) Band: *Oberon Overture*, by the Coldstream Guards. Very good indeed. This is an old recording with fewer instruments than now; tone very rich. (2) Soprano: *Wohin?* (Schubert), Frieda Hempel. Very natural tone, and piano good. (3) Piano: *Caprice poetique* (Liszt), Alfred Cortot. Good. (4) Bass: *Down the Petersky* (Russian folk-song), Chaliapine. Hardly what was expected; a difficult voice and a difficult song. (5) Cello: *Nocturne in E flat* (Chopin), Pablo Casals. A fairly old recording and hardly a truly natural tone on any instrument. (6) Choral: *Exsultate Deo* (Palestrina), Sistine-Vatican Choir. Another difficult record. Played first with fibre and then steel needle (Columbia Ideal). A difficult record in relation to the care with which the basses need bringing out. Aluminium rather tends to the other extreme. But this record and the others by the same choir can be played with fibre needles quite well. (7) Instrumental: *Quartet in D minor* (Mozart) (*Allegretto ma non troppo*), Lener Quartet. Quite good reproduction and instrumental values. (8) Baritone: *Preguntale a las estrellas* (Mexican folk-song), De Gogorza. This is an old recording, but this singer does not seem satisfactory on any machine; a kink in the voice it seems, and inclined to sound "gramophony." On the whole, a good record. As extras there were played Part 1 of the *Mignon Selection*, by the New Queen's Hall Light Orchestra, which was very good indeed, the harp especially, and so also was the tenth item, *June Night*, a Parlophone record by Vincent Lopez's orchestra, which apparently suited the instrument, being on the loud side. Of the remaining items played on this instrument, the following received very good reproduction: (1) Violin: *Romanticische stücke* (Dvorák), Bratza; (2) Duet: *Mira di acerbe lagrime* (*Il Trovatore*), Rosa Raisa and Rimini. Both voices came over equally well; incidentally a record to buy. (3) Instrumental: *Scherzo from Quartet in D, Op. 11* (Tchaikovsky), Lener Quartet. (4) Band: *Grand March from Aida*, Vessela's Italian Band. (5) Band: *Finale Brillante* (Mackenzie), Coldstream Guards Band. (6) Contralto: *O lovely night* (Ronald), Kirkby Lunn. Had time permitted more records would have been tried, but enough were heard to demonstrate the capabilities of the instruments, which received full recognition from the audience.—S. F. D. HOWARTH, *Reporting Secretary*.

**THE SOUTH-EAST LONDON RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.**—On Monday evening, March 9th, Mr. Walter Yeomans, Principal of the Education Department of the Gramophone Co., Ltd., gave a lecture at the Clock Tower Chambers, Lewisham, on "Elgar." There was a full house which listened most attentively to this most interesting of musical lecturers. Briefly, the points were: Elgar is the leader of English musical renaissance. Since Handel practically until the arrival of Elgar, there had been no one who had attempted to put music on a higher plane. Elgar did not set out to be a composer; he was a partisan of no particular school owing little to the Classics except perhaps Brahms. His was not a great output, and whilst at times his work was frankly poor, at others it was really great. But ever since the birth of *Pomp and Circumstance* one often comes across a tune like *Land of hope and glory*, similar in rhythm, line, etc.; Elgar seems obsessed by it. One found it in the *Second Symphony* even, and there is just a touch in the *Enigma Variations* (the *Isabelle* number). In the *Dream of Gerontius* we have the finest of modern oratorios. Elgar was a devout Roman Catholic and almost went beyond himself; with the exception of the *Demon's Chorus*, one might consider it the finest example we have of modern music. Elgar's writing for the voice he considered somewhat unkind, and he also considered that Elgar's songs fail, but Elgar is a master of orchestration, even in these days when scoring for the orchestra is on a high plane, few men can do the job like him. Mr. Ye



instanced the Scherzo of the *Second Symphony*; its full-bloodedness and the helter skelter feeling of it bowls one over. The manner in which he used the side drum is extraordinary; he has shown that drums can be made part and parcel of the musical thought—a drum had a greater use than just to make a din. Elgar also has a weakness for the viola and the clarinet, but through that weakness he achieved strength for knowing so well their limitations and possibilities, he knew how to utilise them. Summing up his many points, Mr. Yeomans stated that if the *Dream of Gerontius*, the *Enigma Variations* and the *Second Symphony* constituted his only contribution to modern British music he had done sufficient to give himself lasting fame.

Mr. Yeomans carefully took his audience through the *Enigma Variations*, explaining much by careful analysis and comment. It is not proposed to give further details here; sufficient has been said to show how interesting the evening was, and Mr. Yeomans deserved the spontaneous expression of appreciation which came from his audience when he signified that his talk was ended.

Next month, 6th April, "Instrumental Music." Visitors are invited, but would oblige by first communicating with the Secretary, 128, Erlanger Road, New Cross, S.E. 14.

#### RICHMOND AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—

A lecture on the two great musicians Bach and Handel comprised the first half of the programme heard at the Society's headquarters, Free Library Cottage, on Monday, February 16th. By the courtesy of the Gramophone Co., Ltd., Mr. W. Yeomans, the lecturer, revealed many interesting facts in the lives of these musicians, and its effect upon their works. Simple passages repeated several times on the gramophone, suitably illustrated how they formed the theme of compositions. Several charming records of the harpsichord played by Mrs. Violet Gordon Woodhouse were demonstrated, including the renowned *Harmonious Blacksmith*, composed by Handel. At the conclusion Mr. Yeomans was accorded a hearty vote of thanks.

The competition arranged by Mr. T. S. Allen, for the best soprano record occupied the second part of the programme, the entries being exclusive to the ladies. A difficult problem confronted the voters as the standard of music was exceptionally high. The recordings of Mme. Amelita Galli-Curci were much in evidence. The result will be announced at the next meeting, which takes place on March 2nd.—T. SYDNEY ALLEN, *Hon. Press Secretary*.

**NORTH WEST GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—At the March 8th meeting members provided pleasant examples of chamber music, which contrasted well with the preceding Wagnerian music. The various editions of the tenor-baritone duets from *Madam Butterfly* were all heard and severely criticised, the honours for production and diction falling easily to Dinh Gilly, who is to be congratulated. The meeting concluded with an interesting demonstration of how choral effects should and should not be recorded, as exemplified by the records of the *Death of Boris*, *Nero*, *Te Deum* (*Tosca*). The next meeting will be held on April 5th, instead of Easter Sunday. Part of the programme will be devoted to settling the rival claims of the available records of the *Bohème* duets.

**NORTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.**—Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* occupied the place of prominence in the programme of our meeting of Saturday, March 14th. This attraction was presented by our well-known Hon. Chairman and Financial Secretary, Mr. L. Ivory. A story of passion and revenge is here expressed musically in its completion from prelude to finale in a masterly manner upon these realistic records of the H.M.V. Co. Played upon the Society's old Seymour external horn gramophone, with H.M.V. No. 2 sound-box, a perfectly full and clear tone was maintained throughout. Mr. Ivory demonstrated in his usual efficient and painstaking manner, and succeeded in adding one more to his numerous triumphs before an exceptionally critical audience. Earlier in the evening, as a sort of "curtain-raiser," a small but select number of Columbia records were introduced by the undersigned. *Pagliacci Selection* (Parts 1 and 2), Queen's Hall Light Orchestra; *Sea Rapture*, Hubert Eisdell (tenor); *Polonaise in E major*, Percy Grainger (piano); *A brown bird singing*, Dora Labbette (soprano); *Serenade*, Catterall, Squire, and Murdoch (instrumental); the two double-sided records of the Sistine-Vatican Choir, by the Parlophone Co., which were received with the greatest amount of approbation as the finest choral records yet issued; *Mignon* (selections), Queen's Hall Light Orchestra; *Golden Song* (Dora Labbette and Hubert Eisdell (duet)); and *The Meistersingers* (Parts 1 and 2), Court Symphony Orchestra. All the above were well received, and the usual votes of thanks were passed and responded to by the demonstrators. Mr. Ivory is to be especially

commended for the brief interesting summary of the "plot" of *Cavalleria Rusticana* prefixed to his portion of the programme. Mr. Edwardes, in a few felicitous words, congratulated Mr. Ivory, at the conclusion, of having so far maintained the established "Ivory" standard of excellence at these demonstrations. April 11th Members' night.—WILLIAM J. ROBINS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

**BLACKPOOL GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—On Thursday, February 19th, at 7.30 p.m., we had an excellent demonstration of records by our popular committee member, Mr. W. Grainger. Mr. Grainger is not only a true enthusiast, but is also an expert on sound reproducing, and had gone to the trouble of testing half a dozen different sound-boxes on his machine in view of his proposed concert, in order that he could give us something really good. The box he selected eventually was the Karna Grand, and really, on his machine, the result was excellent. He made up this machine himself from various stock fittings, including a Garrard 1A motor and a mahogany leaf horn, which latter, by the way, seems impossible to obtain now, according to Mr. Grainger, who was questioned by several members as to the different components of his instrument. In all Mr. Grainger gave us some 24 well chosen items, the principal of these being: *Cortigiani, vil razza dannata* from *Rigoletto*, finely rendered by Stracciari on Columbia; *Melody in F*, 'cello solo by Squire (Columbia); *Carmena*, vocal waltz sung by Alma Gluck (H.M.V.); *Tambourin Chinois*, violin solo by Bratza (Columbia); *Carnival time*, by Derek Oldham, this a lighter contribution from *Madame Pompadour*; the *Waltz Song* from *Tom Jones*, sung by Stralia (Columbia) a brilliant soprano record this; the *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*, played by Percy Grainger (H.M.V.); and a selection by the Prince's Orchestra, *Pirates of Penzance*.

On Thursday, March 5th, we had a turn-up of about 250 people to hear the now famous invention of Mr. Thomas A. Edison, The New Edison, which is rightly termed "The Phonograph with a Soul." This demonstration was arranged through the courtesy of the local agents, Messrs. A. and E. Cook, and given by Mr. Arthur Cook in person. We hired the Cramonde Café for this occasion, and even then only just managed to seat all our guests comfortably. To my mind this New Edison shines more particularly on vocal records and in the reproduction of the piano and violin. In the band records I could certainly hear every instrument, but it sounded to me as though the Edison Concert Band consisted of just about twelve instrumentalists, and there was no background. In an ordinary needle-cut reproduction of an orchestra or band there seem to be more players, or is it because the recording is not so clear and decisive? Anyway, I will leave that point to others more qualified to judge. But one fact certainly stands out above all others to my mind: that the piano is adequately recorded at last; no jarring or buzzing when a particularly heavy chord is struck, just the natural piano tone. The programme, on the whole, was not exactly high-brow, but nevertheless showed up the capabilities of the machine, principal items from a recording (not necessarily a musical point of view) being *Swing Along*, by the Orpheus Male Chorus; *Dear Land of Home*, by Anna Case; *Marcheta* as a violin solo, by Albert Spalding; *Valley of Laughter*, again by Anna Case; *Gloria* from *Twelfth Mass*, by the Gregorian Choir; and the *Second Rhapsody*, played by Sergei Rachmaninoff, this latter being on three sides.

A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Cook on the conclusion of his programme, and a hope that we shall hear more of this instrument in the future.—V. P. BARRAUD THOMAS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

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